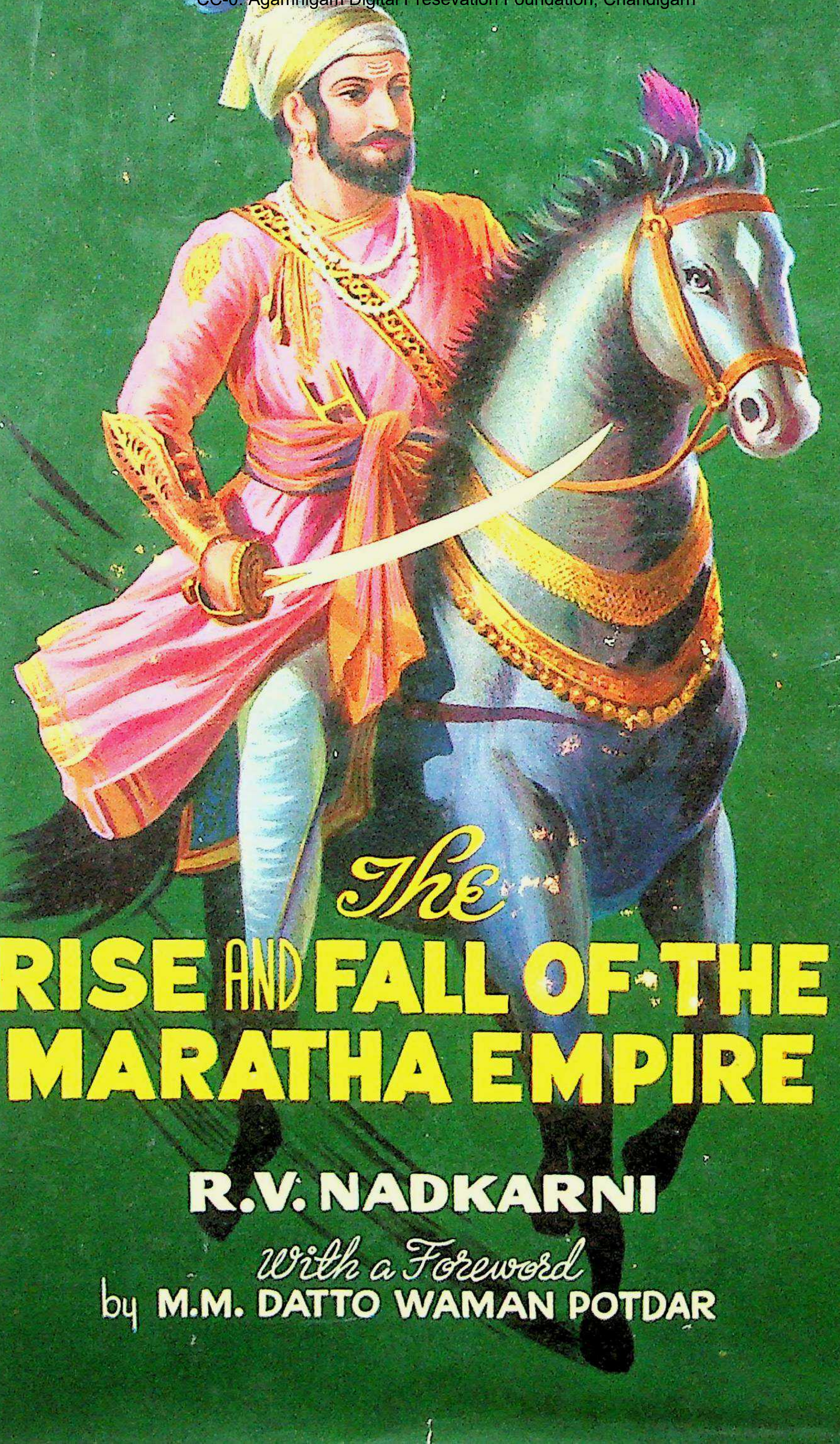

The RISE AND FALL OF THE MARATHA EMPIRE

R.V. NADKARNI

With a Foreword
by M.M. DATTO WAMAN POTDAR

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RAJARAM VYANKATESH NADKARNI, M.A.
Formerly, Principal of Shivaji Public School, Bombay.

FOREWORD BY
MAHAMAHOPADHYAYA D. V. POTDAR

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Dedicated
with profound respect and admiration
to
SHIVAJI THE GREAT
the illustrious founder of
the original Maratha State
in grateful recognition
of his manifold services to our country
as the national hero of unequalled merit
and versatile genius

and

to SHRI YESHWANTRAO B. CHAVAN
the first Chief Minister
of the new "Maharashtra State"
as a mark of my appreciation of
his many outstanding qualities
as a statesman
and able administrator.

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I shall be wanting in my duty if I do not acknowledge at the outset my heavy debt of sincere gratitude to the persons, companies, and institutions—a list is given below—which have lent a helping hand in publishing this volume. But for the generosity of these worthy men and women, I must confess, this book would not have seen the light of day. From them I received grants from Rs. 50 to Rs. 2,000 for the publication fund. Others have obliged by giving the price of the book in advance.

R. V. Nadkarni

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FOREWORD

NEARLY thirty years ago Shri R. V. Nadkarni of Bombay presented the present thesis on "The Rise and Fall of the Maratha Empire" to the Bombay University. I happened to go through it at that time. He has now undertaken the work of publication and this is a very welcome step.

"The Rise and Fall of the Maratha Empire" could never be considered a stale subject. The late Justice Ranade with his extraordinary gift of imagination wrote his brilliant thesis on the "Rise of the Maratha Power" some sixty years ago. The book went out of print. Keen desire was felt by students of history to have it reprinted. Recently two editions of the same have come out simultaneously. This is proof of the fact that the interest of students in the subject is ever-growing. This is just as it should be. The late Justice Ranade had also planned to present a thesis on the Fall of Marathas. But he was not spared to complete the task. Shri Nadkarni in his present thesis has attempted to cover both these aspects of the Maratha Empire, viz. its "Rise" and "Fall". There have been some other publications in English dealing with some of the problems concerned with the subject. Mention may be made of the book, "Where three Empires Meet" by Prof. Joshi and the "Rise of the Peshwas" by Dr. H. N. Sinha.

Since Ranade wrote, the volume of source material about the life and achievements of the Maratha People has increased a hundred-fold. The late V. K. Rajwade, prince among the research scholars, had taken a comprehensive view of history which, as elaborated by him in his Introduction to the sixth volume of his sources, included all such aspects as economic, cultural, social and not merely political. Hence he selected and published sources useful for this purpose. He was even ridiculed by some critics for publishing documents giving economic details such as bazar rates and other information dealing with the life of the common people. The view of history that prevails now is this comprehensive view which takes into account all the activities of the people as a whole.

Now an examination and study of the sources such as they are, dealing with all aspects of human endeavour in India from period to period, is a stupendous task involving an acquaintance with sources in many languages, Indian and foreign. Much has been published so far but more remains to be done. This is an ever-growing process. We cannot wait for its completion. If history is not to be merely a classified mass of sources and documents but is expected also to interpret and instruct, studies about questions like the " Rise and Fall of the Maratha Empire ", as undertaken by Shri Nadkarni, become inevitable. There is no need for us to agree necessarily with the conclusions of any serious student in the field. It is enough for us if the student has spread his canvas wide, selected and weighed his material with care and caution, and presented his conclusions with a view to carrying conviction to his readers.

Shri Nadkarni has attempted to discuss the economic and social factors which, in his opinion, contributed to the " Rise and Fall of the Maratha Empire ". He has done his best in weighing his sources and presenting his thesis. I am sure readers will find much food for thought in this thesis.

Really speaking, the time has come when we must study the life of peoples, their rise and fall, their achievements and failures in different parts of India like the Karnatak, Andhra, Tamilnad, Gujarat, Bengal, Rajasthan and the Punjab. We must study these developments in isolation so far as these various regions are concerned and we must again try to evolve an integrated picture of all of them taken together to find out their common and uncommon factors, interactions and reactions, the responses to internal and external pressures, the divisions, the ideological factors involved, the range of knowledge attempted, the static and dynamic elements in society, national wealth and its distribution, the soil, the climate and all such factors that contribute to the development and progress, failures and set-backs of the people involved. Only after such a comprehensive attempt becomes possible, satisfactory and definitive conclusions could be more securely built up. This process also requires studies as undertaken by Shri Nadkarni in the present thesis. It will not be disputed that the Marathas played a significant role in the History of India for at least one hundred and fifty years. Curious as it may seem the rise of the Marathas coincides roughly with the entry of the British East India Company. Before the British, the Portuguese had established their power in India. The Dutch and the French were also in the field. Ultimately, the British succeeded in becoming masters of India. These were all European nations and perhaps it may not be wrong to suggest that the benefits of the new scientific age that had been ushered in, in Europe, were, more or less, commonly shared by all of them. The social, economic and cultural development of these Christian nations may show much similarity. Why then the British alone succeeded in becoming masters of India? What peculiar economic and social forces, if any, contributed to the success of the British against the Portuguese, the French and the Dutch? And what again were the causes that contributed either to the " Rise " or the " Fall " of the Marathas? Such a study is bound to bear rich fruit. Students who follow Shri Nadkarni have here a fine and wide field for investigation and thought. Even so, as suggested by me above, what Shri Nadkarni has, by his labours, been able to present in his thesis would surely help such studies and further encourage others to continue ceaselessly to throw further light on the subject dealt with by Shri Nadkarni and diverse other subjects which need our most urgent attention.

During the thirty years that have elapsed since Shri Nadkarni attempted his thesis the entire world has undergone a tremendous revolution. New ideologies have sprung up gripping the minds of people. Clouds of new conflict seem to be gathering on the horizon and even beyond in the stratosphere. Things and events will have to be revised against this new background. This is a task involving new challenges which we cannot ignore. It should require an army of young men devoted to such pursuits. The study of history, however, is for the moment on the decline. Hence the contribution of Shri Nadkarni will, I hope, quicken young minds to pursue such subjects. I congratulate Shri Nadkarni once again on his determination to publish the results of his labours. I hope they will be richly rewarded.

D. V. Potdar
Vice-Chancellor
Poona University

Poona
9-10-1962

INTRODUCTION

I HAD occasion to read this thesis and I must confess that it was a stimulating experience for me. I was impressed with the originality of the author, Mr. R. V. Nadkarni, M.A., who has carefully studied Modern European History. Written in powerful English, this is a thought-provoking thesis and puts before us a new but right way of looking at the facts of the Maratha History. The reader will certainly be the wiser for having read this book.

We are apt to overlook the unity and continuity of History, forgetting that the present is the creation of the past. We can modify the future course of our history only by eschewing our past mistakes. The author assures us that in undertaking this enquiry into the causes of the "Rise and Fall of the Maratha Empire" he has pursued a practical object.

Towards this aim the author explains why the attempt of the Marathas to throw off the Muslim yoke for the first time in our history was attended with success; why their power, which was strong enough to overthrow all the indigenous opponents, could not avail against the onslaughts made on it by a Western Power; and how a conflict for supremacy with that Power brought on the fall of the Maratha Empire.

The historical facts pertaining to the Rise and Fall of the Maratha Empire have been explained upto now on the basis of the political activities of the Marathas. Such explanations give only the surface causes and are, therefore, essentially fallacious in judgment. The political movements of a social group are the highest expression of its social facts and these are mainly determined by its economic and social needs and aspirations. If we want to go to the root cause of a political phenomenon we must look for explanation to the basic economic and social forces.

Briefly, Mr. Nadkarni's thesis is, "that the Marathas in the 17th century succeeded against the Mughals because their society had the essential progressive spirit as compared to the Muslim society but as against the British the balance of advantage lay with their Western antagonists. The Maratha Society, being a medieval social organism, was inferior to the contemporary British society. Though the Marathas were socially superior to the Muslims both the societies were feudal in form and medieval in spirit. Western society was, however, a more developed, more progressive organism in the 18th and the 19th centuries and was fast becoming modern in spirit and outlook. It was no wonder, therefore, that the British, a mere handful of foreigners, having their base of operations thousands of miles away from India, could still triumph in the end and overthrow easily the Maratha Empire. It is the spirit that animates the institutions of a social group or a nation that matters."

The author further remarks that, " The two societies, being in different stages of their development differed radically in their structure, environment and outlook on life. Between the Muslim and the Maratha societies it was a difference of degree of similar civilisations but between the Marathas and the English it was a difference of character of their respective culture. The result in both the cases was the same: The inferior social type, the inferior culture was conquered; it was the backward economy, the backward polity that succumbed."

The author has supported this main theme by a richness and variety of apt quotations from authors, both Indian and foreign and has fairly succeeded in proving it. Due weight has been given to the economic background in his treatment of the complex forces that have moulded the course of the Maratha History and in his assessment of their values.

Incidentally, he has vigorously challenged and convincingly disproved some of the pet theories of the foreign writers, e.g., that Shivaji the Great was a " rebel " and " A robber chieftain ". Every Indian should acquaint himself with the author's remarks in this behalf.

Discussing the conservatism of the Hindus, the author says, " the vitality of Hinduism has not yet vanished and perhaps in the near future the Indians with their superior intellect and peculiar genius will become one of the most progressive nations of the world. We possess enough historical optimism to feel sure of the great future of this country." And in this historical optimism and enthusiasm of the author, many of us could easily be one with him.

This book is a comprehensive survey of the Maratha History undertaken for the first time by a patriotic Maratha thinker. So far as the causes of the "Rise" and the "Fall" of the Maratha Empire are concerned, Mr. Nadkarni has discussed the views of the previous writers and has supplemented or modified their arguments wherever necessary.

I have no hesitation in saying that this book is a distinct and original contribution to the existing historical thought and will no doubt advance our social cause in no uncertain manner. I wish to invite the reader's attention to the author's "Conclusion" which should claim his careful thought so that he should be inspired to activity calculated to reform the Indian Society and to regenerate the Indian Nation. Verily, Mr. R. V. Nadkarni, M.A., the author, deserves our grateful thanks for I can say that he has laid the foundation for the overdue reform of our society on the right lines.

Bombay
16-12-1962

T. V. Parvate
Journalist

PREFACE

DEMOCRACY in its modern sense was unknown to our ancestors both ancient and medieval. And yet no one can think of any other form of government for India in the immediate future. Such is the peculiar condition of our society that we do not want autocracy but we are not fit as yet for democracy. I doubt whether a modern political system will be found workable in our society which still retains its medieval marks to a considerable extent. At any rate it is certain that during the transitional period the defects of our social organisation will be reflected on our government. That cannot be avoided. But if our democracy is not to slide into the pure rule of the aristocracy of wealth, public opinion must be educated in favour of democratic social institutions. When we shall have created the necessary social environment all danger of a democratic government working in a non-progressive social setting shall be over. Till then, as we cannot tolerate oligarchy even in a democratic garb, social forces must be built up which will make the lapse of our government into old grooves impossible. The lessons of Maratha History, properly interpreted, should convince many people of the urgent need of modernizing our social organisation.

Maratha History has now fallen into perspective and the main facts of the " Rise and Fall of the Maratha Empire " are fairly well known. A critical survey of the most fascinating period of our medieval history could, therefore, be undertaken with profit. I have attempted to interpret the existing facts from a new angle of vision. I firmly believe that without an all-sided development no nation can long retain its political independence in modern times. It was so with the Marathas in the first decade of the 19th century. The English, because of their superior social organisation, easily conquered the Marathas.

Though the facts are old, the spirit is new and it is hoped the reader will not miss original thought throughout. The last two chapters, however, should be found interesting since in these I have discussed the causes of the rise and fall of the Maratha Empire from my point of view.

I know that this small production, given more time, could have been improved in several directions. If, however, I have succeeded at least in suggesting a new way of thought which may, in course of time, have direct influence on the thought processes of our society, I shall consider my labour amply rewarded.

My thanks are due to Prof. R. G. Pratapgiri, M.A., under whom I worked, for his full co-operation in preparing this thesis. I am indeed grateful to Mahamahopadhyaya D. V. Potdar for his kindness in agreeing to write the Foreword for this book and to my friend Mr. T. V. Parvate for his introduction. I must also thank the India Printing Works for having readily undertaken to print the book as expeditiously as possible and for having submitted faultless proofs, thus minimising my labour in correcting them. The somewhat fuller index is also due to their support to the idea and encouragement. I have further to thank Mr. Ramdas Bhatkal of the Popular Prakashan for his hearty co-operation in publishing this book.

Bombay R. V. NADKARNI
1st May 1966

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PART I

CHAPTER I

CONDITIONS OF THE PROBLEM

"HISTORY must from time to time be rewritten not because many new facts have been discovered but because new aspects come into view, because the participant in the progress of an age is led to standpoints from which the past can be regarded and judged in a novel manner."—GOETE.

"Every generation," Mark Pattison said, "requires the fact to be recast in its own mould and demands that history be written from its own point of view." This is because ideas change and the whole mode and manner of looking at things alters in every age.[1] Our aim is not merely to satisfy the reader's curosity about the dead past but to help to modify his view of the present and to influence his forecast of the future. History, as Sir John Seeley says, while it should be scientific in its method should pursue a practical object.[2]

We live in a universe which proceeds according to regular laws. There is, therefore, a certain regularity about human affairs. The same causes will in the main produce always the same effects. In order to understand the relation between causes and effects we must inquire into the past experience of mankind, that is to say, we must study history. Thus the knowledge of the past, the knowledge of the general laws deduced from a comparison of what we observe will lead to a knowledge of the future.[3]

There is no regularity in the course of historical phenomena such as may perhaps be observed in the motions of the planets. The historian cannot recall the antecedents of an historic event and make them exist again at will for they deal with human life which is unique. Man and his motives are a complex phenomenon and hence parallels from history would be of dubious value, if identity of circumstances and results is expected in all cases; conditions, because they are very complex in their very nature, cannot be made to recur. If the test of a natural law is its reliability as a basis for accurate prediction of future events there are no historical laws analogous to those of the more exact physical sciences. Human nature, however, is identical in all places and at all times and it takes generations of conscious effort to change it even to the smallest extent. The historian can only detect general tendencies, not natural laws like Newton's law of Gravitation. From a scientific analysis of tendencies in individuals and social groups, it is quite possible to get causal relations. All other circumstances remaining the same, certain given historical forces would produce certain identical consequences. Otherwise there would be no need to write histories; the *raison d'être* of historians would vanish.

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[1] Teggart: "*Theory of History*", p. 8.

[2] *Expansion of England*, p. 1.

[3] Seeley: *Introduction to Political Science*, pp. 5-6.

Even if the historian could be sure of his facts there is no sure means of determining which among these had decisive influence. The difficulty is due, not to the non-existence of casual relations but to the multiplicity of antecedents and consequences of any historical happening. "In the Kaleidoscope of the past," says Mr. John Buchan, "we cannot as a rule sort out effects and causes with any precision nor can we weigh events in the meticulous scales which science demands. Even when causes are reasonably plain their classification eludes us. We cannot tell which is *causa causans*, which are proximate or efficient or final." [4]

The study of history has been often misunderstood to be concerned with the past, a past the events of which have finished happening and which has no relation with the present. The historian's function and business is misinterpreted to be to give us a narration of events as they happened only chronologically arranged. It is forgotten that the past is a "living past", that the present is the creation of the past and is big with the future as Leibnitz would insist. As Benedetto Croce has observed, every true history is contemporary history and it is not fanciful to consider the past as perpetually present.[5] The past, therefore, regarded simply as the past in the crude realistic sense is wholly unthinkable.[6] To get a correct historical perspective the unity and continuity of history must be realised.[7] How true is H. G. Wells's complaint that "Historians are for the most part very scholarly men nowadays. They go in fear rather of small errors than of disconnectedness; they dread the certain ridicule of a wrong date more than the disputable attribution of a wrong value!"[8]

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[4] Rede Lecture for 1929—"The causal and the casual in History", Cambridge University Press.

Our aim, in this undertaking, is practical, the story of the rise and fall of the Maratha Empire is interesting so far as it can help or hinder our efforts to build up the future of this land on a sure foundation. We are what we are at present as a result of what we were in the past.[9] It must be realised that our present lies deeply embedded in our past and the future will be largely determined by our present lives. We can modify the future course of our history only in the light of our past mistakes. From the invasion of Alexander the Great down to the comparatively modern times of the conquest of India by the British, with the exception of the chequered existence of the Maratha State for nearly 150 years, the rule of the foreigner has been a significant fact of Indian History. It will be highly instructive then to explain why and how the Maratha Empire arose in the first place and why in the next place it went to pieces in so short a time. An inquiry, subject of course to the general limits of every historical investigation, into the causes of the Rise and Fall of the Maratha Empire is expected to be of great importance from the practical point of view. Things do not exactly repeat themselves in History and changed circumstances and times require changed outlook and different methods. But we hold with Jacob Burekhardt that we may learn from history, not in order to be more prudent another time but in order to be wise for all time.

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[5] *Theory and History of Historiography*, p. 11. See also R. G. Collingwood's article in the Journal of Philosophical Studies; Max Muller: *Selected Essays*, Vol. II, p. 11.

[6] See Prof. Pratapgiri's Article "On the History of India", in *Triveni*, Vol. V, No. 3.

[7] Freeman has familiarised us with the conception of continuity in History.

[8] H. G. Wells: *The Outline of History*, p. 4.

[9] Read Graham Wallas, "*Our Social Heritage*".

The study of the Maratha History assumes importance from another fact. The history of the Marathas is the history of this country for nearly two centuries. They were the immediate predecessors of our present rulers. Sir Williams Hunter says, "The British won India, not from the Mughals but from the Hindus. Before we appeared as conquerors the Mughal Empire had broken up. Our conclusive wars were neither with the Delhi Kings nor with their revolted governors but with the two Hindu confederacies, the Marathas and the Sikhs. Our last Maratha war dates as late as 1818 and the Sikh confederation was not finally overcome until 1849."[10] Grant Duff describes the Marathas as "our predecessors in conquest in India." Ranade also takes the same view.[11] "The Maratha race," remarks Acworth, "has been for centuries and is still among the most important of those who inhabit the Peninsula."[12] Beginning with the capture of Torna in 1646, till his death in 1680 at the comparatively young age of fifty-three, their national hero, Shivaji the Great, founded a big Hindu Kingdom in defiance of the sultanates of Bijapur and Golkonda, then tottering to their fall and the Mughal Empire, then at the zenith of its power under one of its greatest emperors, Aurangzeb. Within ten years of its founder's death the infant Maratha State was faced with a serious crisis. Sambhaji was captured and put to a barbarous and cruel death and the young heir to the throne, Shahu, was kept a prisoner at Delhi. The very existence of the Maratha power was at stake. The danger called forth all the noble qualities of which the Maratha nation was capable and undeterred by the power or prestige of the Mughal Empire the Marathas carried on a life and death struggle with the enemies. Again and again they were defeated but each reverse seemed to strengthen their resolve to wrest victory in the very face of defeat and by their unfaltering devotion and undaunted valour they secured the decision in their favour. With the return of Shahu to his paternal kingdom a new era of conquest and territorial expansion began and the Maratha horsemen under their brave leaders, the Peshvas, the Shindes, the Holkars, the Gaikwads, the Pawars, the Bhonsles, overran almost the whole of India. Their Empire extended from sea to sea; satrapies were created and Maratha "cleruchis" sprang up in different parts of India. The Maratha ditch at Calcutta testifies as much to their exploits at a scene so far away from their home as to the terror that their name inspired among the people of their country. On the fatal field of Panipat their armies upheld the cause of "India for Indians" against the Afghan invader and though they were totally defeated, such was the inherent vitality in the nation that it easily recovered from the shock within the next few years. During the years when India was gradually "becoming red" the Marathas, as Acworth holds, were probably still the most powerful political integer within it.[13] The Maratha Empire was outwardly still in its full vigour when a conflict for supremacy with a Western Power brought on its fall. The only insignificant remnant of this once glorious Empire were, till India became free, the three big native states of Gwalior, Indore and Baroda and several other small states like Kolhapur which were but the subordinate allies of the British Government to whom the idea of an empire in India seems to be bequeathed, as it were, by the Marathas.

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[10] "*The Indian Empire: Its People, History and Products*", p. 317.
[11] *Rise of the Maratha Power*, p. 4.
[12] *Ballads of the Marathas*—Introduction, p. 5.

The story of the glorious achievements of Shivaji the Great and his successors forms but a small episode of the long epic of Indian History. None the less a scientific investigation of the problem—why the attempt of the Marathas to throw off the Muslim yoke for the first time in our history was attended with success; why their power, which was strong enough to overthrow all the indigenous opponents could not avail against the onslaughts made on it by a Western power—is bound to be highly interesting as well as instructive. A comprehensive survey of the causes of the Rise and Fall of the Maratha Empire will therefore be attempted here with a view to finding out the defects and deficiencies, either of national character or of social organisation of the Marathas; their sins of omission and commission and to explain whence and how the consequent weakness arose. Incidentally we shall have to discuss the qualities possessed by the British which gave them their Imperial sway. All this discussion will, it is hoped, help us to understand the present, why it is what it is, its ingredient features as well as its tendencies so that we could grasp the significance of this historical evolution.

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[13] *Ballads of the Marathas*—Introduction, pp. 5-6.

How then do we approach the subject and what is our view-point? We treat the subject of the present enquiry from a new angle of vision, new at least to most of the Indian historians. Our conception of the science of history and its utility is radically different from that of our conventional historians who regard history as simply "past politics" and who therefore write books which are good compendiums of data about kings, rebellions and battles. The Rise and Fall of the Maratha Empire has been explained upto now on the basis of the political activities of the Marathas. Such superficial explanations giving as they do only surface causes are not only unhistorical but they are essentially fallacious in judgement and therefore largely untrue. We are, however, fully persuaded that our political movements are the highest expression of our social facts and these are determined largely by economic and social needs and aspirations. If we would therefore seriously investigate the causes of the rise of the Maratha State in the 17th century and its decay, decline and downfall in the beginning of the 19th, we must go to the root cause, viz. the basic economic and social forces. We must examine systematically the econmic condition of the Marathas, their social habits, their social organisation, their institutions, their art, culture, literature, their thoughts, their aspirations, their religious beliefs and their philosophical systems,—in short their social and economic environment. Life in all its manifestations—society, industry, commerce, religion, art, literature must be taken into account before any conclusions are drawn. As a result of their past, the Marathas were in a particular stage of social development and all their mistakes were, in their final analysis, due to the backwardness of their society and their social and economic surroundings. In any enquiry of this nature the social facts are the fundamental facts; the social and economic causes, the chief causes; all other factors either in the "Rise" or in the "Fall" of the Maratha Empire follow from these. The so-called causes of the failure of the Marathas which have been advanced by our predecessors are not so much the causes as they are the results of these social forces which were working in the midst of the Maratha society of the 18th century. Our thesis is that the Maratha society of the time was a medieval social organism and therefore inferior to the contemporary English society. The Marathas could be so easily overthrown only because their society was static and incapable of digesting new experience. It was no wonder therefore that the British, a mere handful of foreigners, having their base of operations thousands of miles away from India, could still triumph in the end and overthrow the Maratha Empire. It is the spirit that animates institutions, that matters. In the absence of a progressive spirit no nation can either be great or retain its freedom for any length of time. Sooner or later it is bound to go under in the struggle of nations. The Marathas in the 17th century succeeded against the Mughals because their society had the essential progressive spirit as compared to the Muslim society but as against the British, the balance of advantage lay not with the Marathas but with their western antagonists. The western society was, in the 18th and 19th centuries, a more developed, more progressive organism; it was becoming modern in spirit and outlook while the Hindu and Muslim societies were feudal in form and medieval in spirit. It was a fight between one nation drawing its vigour from the mobile, progressive, and free spirit of its institutions, a spirit capable of inventing new things and assimilating new experience, a spirit favourable to independene, liberty, democracy and the other nation which owed its weakness to a spirit that was essentially stagnant, despotic, undemocratic, a spirit that could not grasp new ideas and paid servile deference to traditions and customs. The two societies, being in the different stages of their development, differed radically in their structure, environment and outlook. Between the Muslim and the Maratha societies it was a difference of degree of similar civilizations but between the Marathas and the British it was a difference of character of their respective culture.

The result in both cases was the same; the inferior social type, the inferior culture was conquered; it was the backward economy, the backward polity that succumbed.

In our treatment of the complex forces that have moulded the course of the Maratha history and in our assessment of their value, we have given due weight to the economic background of that history. Since the time of the Chartist movement in

England, the hunger-riots of the Silesian weavers in Germany and the February revolution in France and its repercussions all over Europe, a new philosophy of history the Marxian economic interpretation of history has come into vogue and it is increasingly being realised that the economic background of historical events is, as Laski[14] has shown, of fundamental importance in the interpretation of history. The economic necessity which directs a social group and its activities must not therefore be lost sight of in our discussion. We are not, however, indifferent to the effects on historical development of such factors as for example the personal equation or the physical environment like geography, race, climate, etc. Montesqieu has long ago pointed out the influence of climate and other natural conditions on the national character and civilization.[15]

As regards the part played by great personalities in history we must confess, we cannot affirm the " Great man " theory which holds that everything which has been accomplished is the realization and embodiment of the thoughts of great men. The common man has his place in history as much as the hero. We have neither ignored the role of the hero nor deflated him to the stature of the surrounding mediocrity, neither have we submerged him in " movements " and " forces ". No individual, no matter how vast his historic importance, can alter the historic process in any direction he might choose; to be successful he must be in harmony with the social forces of his times. But those forces cannot accomplish everything by themselves; the " Great Man " is then necessary and therefore his influence is not wholly negligible. It is the great man, who, as a practical and thinking person, " has an insight into the requirements of the time—what was ripe for development." [16] If then in one sense we look upon Shivaji the Great as in harmony with social forces of his times and so a product of his age, we have to regard him in another sense, as drawing the impulse of his life and career from himself. On the other hand, the importance of the common man cannot be overlooked. Political and social institutions cannot thrive in a vacuum neither can they long survive unless they are congruent with the needs and aspirations of the mass of people. Their success depends so much on the level of the mass knowledge and mass psychology. That is why people get the political constitution for which they are socially fit. Given an ignorant society without proper education, without enlightened public opinion, there can be no success for the experiment of a democratic constitution.

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[14] See his essay in *Harmsworth's Universal History*, Vol. I.

[15] *Spirit of Laws*—Bk. 14. See also Hegel: *Philosophy of History*, p. 46.

[16] See Hegel: *Philosophy of History*, p. 30.

In a review of historical facts from the point of view as set forth above, there can be admittedly no place for chance or good luck or destiny or fate. There are historians who believe that historical development is subject to certain controlling laws. Others are impressed with chance occurrences and their momentary consequences. Historical facts are sought to be explained on the theological doctrine of predestinations. Events have been regarded as taking place under an overruling Providence and the historic process has been seen as an unfolding of the changeless. Prof. Cheyney maintains in his "Law in History" and other essays that "events come of themselves so to speak; that is, they came so consistently and unavoidably as to rule out as causes, not only physical phenomena but voluntary human action. Providence, fate, destiny, law has controlled the affairs of man as it has of men, as it controls all things. Human history, like the stars, has been controlled by immutable self-existent law."

Grant Duff has compared the rise of the Maratha Power to a sudden conflagration like those which occur in the forests of Sahyadri.[17] Other Indian and European writers on Maratha History attribute likewise the rise of the Maratha Power solely to fortuitous circumstances. Similarly, the premature deaths of Shivaji the Great, Bajirao I, Madhavrao, Mahadji Shinde, the capture of Sambhaji by Aurangzeb, or the assumption of the supreme command on the battle field of Panipat by Sadashiv Rao Bhau have been interpreted by Maratha historians as the cruel acts of an adverse destiny. The British dominance in India, Sir Alfred Lyall[18] remarks, is commonly regarded as a man might look at a great prize he had drawn by luck in a lottery; it is supposed to have been won by incalculable chance. Sir John Seeley lends himself to this popular belief. "Our acquisition of India," he says, "was made blindly. Nothing

[17] *History of the Marathas,* Vol. I.
[18] *British Dominion in India,* p. 124.

great that has ever been done by Englishmen was done so unintentionally as the conquest of India." [19] Mr. Ramsay Muir also endorses this view.[20]

It was in some such sense that Count Joseph De Maistre and Viscounte Louis De Bonald appealed to history against the doctrines of the French Revolution; they held that it is "nature" that operates in the history of mankind and so historical process is a process of nature and therefore inevitable. To De Maistre specially "the Revolution was not man-made but a visitation of Providence sent to us on account of our sins." To some of our historians, e.g. Mr. N. C. Kelkar [21] the disruption and dissolution of the Maratha Empire is due to the inexorable will of God. These writers never explain to us why the will of God should be exercised against "the most spiritual people on earth" and in favour of the British who are a nation of "arch seekers after materialism". Dr. Rabindranath Tagore rightly inveighs against our spirit of spiritual vanity, against our boasted spirituality when he draws attention to the fact that the most spiritual of peoples, the chosen of God are, in spite of that, laid low and their heads are made to roll in the dust at the feet of the conqueror. However virtuous and God-fearing Indians might be, they perpetuate the heinous sin of being a degenerate society. Either the Indians are not spiritual as the writers would have us believe or there is no such thing as "destiny".

If we are to have faith in these fatalistic doctrines we must be prepared to be condemned to the perpetuation of the *status quo.* One of the reasons why our Indian writers adduce such irrational arguments is that either they are deficient perhaps in the scientific knowledge or they overlook the fact of the continuity of history. To write a history is one thing, to write a good history is yet another thing. But to be able to interpret historical facts the historian must know something of several other branches of study like Economics, Politics, Sociology, Biology and Psychology. He must have a comparative knowledge of other countries and nations especially of Europe, if for no other reason than that India and her destiny is today linked up with the West. A cursory acquaintance with the history of civilization is thus necessary. A historian, not thus mentally equipped, would in his ignorance explain what he cannot understand as the working of the supernatural, on the handy basis of the "will of God". The demands of our reason dictate that we should reject these easy explanations as inadequate, puerile, unscientific, unhistorical and unworthy of civilized man. Possessing a free will man can never be a shuttlecock of capricious destiny. He is the architect of his own fortune. You may lose a battle if the general is shot by a stray bullet by mere chance; a campaign here or a campaign there may be won by the happy turn of events in your favour but you can never win all your battles and all your campaigns by sheer good fortune. The death of a hero at a critical moment can have disastrous results for a nation only in the case of its being incapable of producing new leaders to take his place. If Shivaji the Great had not died in 1680 and had continued to live, perhaps he would have been defeated by Aurangzeb, perhaps he might have been reduced to dire extremities and all the glory of the subsequent War of Independence would have for ever been lost to us.[22] How do we know that the military capacity and the spirit of self-sacrifice which the Marathas showed on that memorable occasion to their eternal credit were not party due to the memory and example of Shivaji the Great and the heroic martyrdom of Sambhaji? Not merely the example of the one, but also the tragedy of the other were possibly alike necessary for the flowering of Maratha patriotism. Granted that the Peshva Madhavrao or Mahadji Shinde would have sustained the fortunes of the Maratha Empire for some years more had they lived longer, but could they or even Nana Phadnavis have prevented the inevitable working of certain pernicious principles which had already seized the Maratha society in their fatal grip? The Marathas were reaping the bitter fruits of the seed they had so blindly sown in their polity. How could anybody have arrested the rot that had already set in in their society? There was only one way in which it would have been possible to save that decaying nation and that was by carrying out radical social, political and economic reforms. But no man of the period, however farsighted, could have seen what reforms were necessary. Even if he could know them, if he attempted to introduce them in an unripe society he would have been forced to pay the penalty for his revolutionary zeal. He would have in all probability shared the fate of a Joseph II or an Amanullah.

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[19] *Expansion of England,* p. 179-180.
[20] *Expansion of Europe.*
[21] *Marathe Va Ingraj,* pp. 1-2.

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[22] Such speculation as to the " might have beens " is useful in stimulating inner appreciation of what may be called crucial situations in history. As Mr. Buchan says, " to reflect how easily the course of things might have been different is to learn perspective and humility ".

Fortuitous occurrences therefore cannot have any control over the march of historic forces; they cannot by themselves produce lasting results unless they act along with other more profound causes. In all social facts—and historical events are social facts—the most potent cause is Man himself. He alone can, as already said, make or mar his future. Has not the proverbial fatalism of the Hindu done enough harm already?

There is another type of historians to whose pet theories this thesis will be a rejoinder. Stanley Lane-Poole says, "In the East the people do not change"[23] and "conservative in everything the Indian cherishes even his oppressors."[24] There are others who are never tired of insisting on the unchanging character of the East. Again, Vincent Smith[25] remarks, "the Maratha State at any stage, whether during Shivaji's lifetime or in its later developments under the Peshvas and the chiefs who replaced them as leaders never served any good purpose or conferred any benefit upon India, except in so far as it gratified Hindu sentiment in the particular ways above stated. The Maratha independent rule in all its varieties until 1818 was the rule of professed robbers." The same writer has not scrupled to misrepresent the aim and methods of the Great Shivaji by calling that noble soul, "A robber chieftain who inflicted untold misery on hundreds of thousands of innocent people, Hindus and Mahomedans alike, merely for the sake of gain, using without scruple all kinds of cruelty and treachery to attain his wicked ends".

Such irresponsible statements are made as a result either of "colossal ignorance" or of deliberate design.[26] In the following pages an attempt has been made to point out why the Indians were conservative and progress was at a standstill in the particular stage of their evolution; how, far from accepting foreign rule the Maratha nation at any rate rose in revolt against their oppressors and established, not a robber state but a truly National State. Whether Shivaji the Great was a "robber chieftain" or a national hero, whether he "inflicted untold misery on hundreds of thousands of people" and whether he resorted to "all kinds of cruelty and treachery to attain his wicked ends"—all these questions have to be fully and finally discussed.[27] To say these ungallant things of that great moral personality for the sake of satisfying private and partisan feeling is nothing short of a base calumny on the character of an idealist of idealists towering far high above his compeers of the 17th century. Shivaji and Akbar are the two great sons that Mother India produced in the Middle Ages and they shall always remain our heroes. E. B. Havell says in his introduction to his "Aryan Rule in India" that India must build as Akbar built and we may be permitted to add that India shall achieve also as did Shivaji.

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[23] *Mediaeval India*—Preface, p. 5.

[24] Ibid, p. 91.

[25] *Oxford History of India,* p. 436.

[26] Mr. V. A. Smith ceases to be a historian and becomes a partisan when he comes to chronicle the Muslim and British periods.

Some of our Indian publicists also from time to time refer to "Eastern culture" and "Western culture" as if these two civilizations are the product of two different human natures. These good persons regard them so incompatible with each other that they believe that the East will never be able to digest the Western culture and that it is not even desirable to do so. They look upon their Aryan civilization as a superior culture and they want to shun if possible the Western civilization as poison.

Our thesis seeks to prove that there are no such things as "Eastern civilization" and "Western civilization". They are two aspects of the same human spirit. European civilization, as we now understand it, is a continuous development of their medieval culture which was in many respects similar to what our friends choose to call "Eastern Civilization". Civilization arose in the Orient and early Europe obtained it there.[28]

[27] Even Mr. J. Sircar, who at one time held that Shivaji was a robber, had subsequently to admit that no robber chief could found a state like the one Shivaji established and that expanded into an all-embracing Empire.

[28] See "*Ancient times, a history of the early world*", by James Henry Breasted, Preface, p. 5.

Differences in the progress of nations are not of kind but only of degree. There are different cultural stages, and it may be that in any given period, one nation might be ahead of another. But both travel by the same road. We have upto now developed in one direction only and for us the modern times begin with the advent of the British in this land as it began for the Europeans in the 15th century. Anybody who has the desire to understand the past history of this country can see that the Hindu has changed in the past as in the 17th century when the Marathas ushered in an era of Hindu Renaissance, is changing in the present and will change in the future. If the reformation was slow in the past, it will be rapid in days to come. Their advance, therefore, is only one stage further on in the march of human civilization and we must also take the same course if we are to progress as other Asiatic countries like Japan, Turkey, China, Persia and even Afghanistan are doing. The modern history of the contemporary Asiatic countries conclusively proves that there is no escape from this historical process for Indians as well. It further gives the lie direct to the opinion that the East is conservative and that it does not change. After all, there are good reasons why the Hindus were conservative in the medieval period but that does not mean that they will always remain so. The vitality of Hinduism has not yet vanished and perhaps in the near future the Indians, with their superior intellect and peculiar genius, will become one of the most progressive nations of the world. One of our objects in undertaking to write this thesis is to help this inevitable historic evolution as far as one man can influence it by conscious effort at least by indicating the direction of human activities and we possess enough historical optimism to feel sure of the great future of this country.

Towards the fulfilment of this aim we have assumed the role of a "critical thinker". We hold with Lavroff that "Without criticism there is no development, without criticism there is no perfection, without criticism of one's environment man would never have progressed beyond the animal stage".[29] Hecker, in his scholarly work on Russian Sociology, sums up Lavroff's ideas on the role of the individual: "Thus the critical reasoning individual may be a disintegrating force destroying existing social forms, initiating and organising new ones. He is a variant from the norm, a nucleus about which, under favourable conditions, a new type or group is formed."[30] Only in this way can our inertia be shaken.

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[29] Quoted by Hecker: *Russian Sociology* (1915), p. 108.

The survey of the causes of the rise and fall of the Maratha Empire as given by us in subsequent chapters will also incidentally explain certain special features that are noticeable in the history of Medieval India, particularly in the history of the Marathas. These peculiarities whether of national or personal character or of Government proceed from the same basic social fact, the weakness of society as being medieval in tone and structure. It shall be our endeavour to explain side by side, why there was no constitutional growth in Maratha History as we have in the ancient Greeks or Romans or the modern Europeans; why there was no election principle, as we understand it now, anywhere in the Maratha institutions; why there was no regular system of education in the Maratha state; why every Indian Government tended always to become personal despotism in its form in spite of one or two attempts made by the Maratha statesmen to introduce government by consultation; why every Indian army, except the Maratha armies in the period when they were first asserting their national Independence, could be easily routed on the death or disappearance of their general from the battlefield and so on.

None of our predecessors in the field have dealt with the problem and its two aspects,—Rise as well as Fall—in a comprehensive manner. The only writer to explain the causes of the Rise of the Maratha power in its true perspective was Justice Ranade but he has not brought the latter Maratha history under his review. His brilliant work, "The Rise of the Maratha Power" deals only with the first part of our problem; he was cut off by death before he accomplished fully his appointed task. It is in the fitness of things that he has pointed out that there was a religious and social upheaval in the Maratha society of that period and to this he mainly traces the Rise of the Marathas. But he has entirely neglected their economic factor which, in our opinion, was not only the prime cause of the political upheaval of the Marathas for Independence but was also one of the active forces behind the religious ferment. Of course the religious movement was the result of other historic forces as well. Thus, though Justice Ranade's contribution is most valuable as proving that the birth of the Maratha state was not merely the product of fortuitous events and that it was not a robber state, his conclusions require to be supplemented and modified from the economic point of view before we can have a complete and scientific view of the causes of the Rise of the Maratha State in the 17th century. After Ranade no attempt has so far been made to throw fresh light on the subject. In regard to the second part of our thesis (the causes of the downfall of the Maratha Empire), hitherto a systematic analysis on scientific lines has been lacking. The Maratha history after the release of Shahu has not been subjected to any searching criticism with a view to explaining why the last Hindu Empire which apparently had got such a promising start also went the way of its less glorious predecessors. Mr. N. C. Kelkar, Mr. Vasudeo Shastri Khare, Mr. Sardesai, Mr. Sarkar and other writers have now and again attempted in a perfunctory manner to give their reasons for the downfall of the Maratha nation but the causes they have put forward are inadequate and in certain cases even misleading. In the interest of scientific thoroughness, if for nothing else, there is the need for a comprehensive survey explaining both the sides of the question. Ours is an endeavour to supply this want and thus at least systematise our knowledge of this subject. The views of the other writers will be discussed in another chapter later on. We shall, in the meanwhile, proceed to study the historical setting of the problem which will lead us ultimately to a retrospective discussion of the causes of the Rise and Fall of the Maratha Empire.

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[30] Ibid, p. 110.

CHAPTER II

THE MARATHA UPHEAVAL

IN the latter half of the 17th century, a revolutionary change of great importance was brought about in the political system of India. The coronation of Shivaji the Great at Raigad in 1674 announced to the world the birth of a new independent Hindu Kingdom in the Deccan which was, in course of time, to expand into an Empire, bringing the whole of India under its control. It is indeed a remarkable fact that the Marathas asserted their independence with success, opposed as they were by Aurangzeb, the master of the vast resources of the Great Mughal empire. In order to understand fully the significance of this emergence of the Maratha nationality in the 17th century, we must look to the social, political and economic condition of the Hindus under the Sultans of the Deccan during the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries. In the course of these centuries, two movements, one religious and social and the other political, were shaping themselves among the people of Maharashtra and it was the confluence of both these currents that carried Shivaji the Great and his heroic companions to victory on the crest of its wave.

Allaudin's invasion of the Deccan in 1294 was the first appearance of the Muslim in the South. During the last hundred years the arms of the Crescent had subjugated the whole of Northern India and Allaudin's expedition to the Deccan was an indication that the ambition of the conquerors would not be satisfied until the South as well was brought under their sway. During Allaudin's reign three great armies were led by his famous general, Malik Kafoor, and this time the greater part of Maharashtra was conquered. The kings of Deogiri at Doulatabad struggled manfully against Allaudin and his successors at Delhi. Their attempts to re-establish Hindu Sovereignty, however, proved unsuccessful and Maharashtra remained under the rule of the Delhi Sultans till 1347. That year marks the establishment of the Bahamani dynasty whose sway was exerted in Maharashtra far upwards of a century and a half. It came to an end in 1526, but five separate states had been formed in the Deccan some years before the rule of the Bahamani Sultans terminated. Of these five independent kingdoms, only three, namely, those of Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golkonda existed at the times when the Marathas began to emerge from their subjection. Early in the 16th century, the Portuguese were also trying to get a footing on the coast line of Maharashtra. They had taken Goa, Daman and Bassein and other coastal stations and had established their rule at these places. The Portuguese were one of the powers with whom the Marathas had to fight in the early days of their conquests.

Before the conquest by the Muslims, Maharashtra seems to have been parcelled out into many small kingdoms, more or less independent. Since Allaudin's time the Marathas lost their independence and though there were few rebellions, the Marathas did not easily reconcile themselves to their new subordinate position as vassals to their Muslim conquerors. Ultimately, however, they had to accept their inferior status owing to the disunion in their ranks, such want of unity being a characteristic feature of the whole of the Hindu society of those times. But the sense of humiliation at their subdugation by the foreigners always remained, barring a few big military jahagirdars, alive and when later on events took a favourable turn it broke forth with great force and helped the movement of freedom onwards in the beginning of the 17th century. In the meanwhile with the loss of their political independence, their material prosperity also was on the wane and the Hindus of the Deccan had to put up with all sorts of cruelties at the hands of the Delhi Sultans or their victorious generals. Vincent Smith says, "The expeditions in the Deccan conducted by the Eunuck Malik Kafur, the infamous favourite of the Sultan, were ended in 1311 when the victorious general returned to Delhi with an almost incredible amount of spoil collected from the accumulated treasures of the South. The invaders practised dreadful cruelties."[1] Allaudin's policy towards his Hindu subjects was the traditional policy which the Muslim state always followed in the case of the Hindus in the early days of the Delhi Sultanates. The Ulamas, the powerful priestly class, always appealed to the fanaticism of the Muslim rulers and enjoined upon the devout Sultan the sacred duty of the extirpation of idolatry, the extinction of every form of dissent from the accepted dogma and the conversion of the infidel population. Religious persecution was therefore the common lot of all the Hindus until the advent of the more enlightened Mughals and especially of Emperor Akbar. Allaudin, as Ziauddin states,[2] required his advisers to draw up "rules and regulations for grinding the Hindus and for depriving them of that wealth and property which fostered disaffection and rebellion." The cultivated land was directed to be all measured and the government took half of the gross produce instead of one-sixth as provided by immemorial custom.

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[1] *Oxford History of India*, by V. A. Smith, p. 233.

"No Hindu could hold up his head and in their houses no sign of gold or silver or of any superfluity was to be seen. Blows, confinements in the stocks, imprisonment and chains were all employed to enforce payment." To a learned lawyer he said "Be assured that the Hindus will never become submissive and obedient till they are reduced to poverty. I have, therefore, given orders that just sufficient shall be left to them from year to year, of corn, milk and curds but that they shall not be allowed to accumulate hoards and property." The turbulent Marathas must have come in for a due share of this "crafty cruelty of Allaudin who shed, we are told, more innocent blood than ever Pharoah was guilty of".[3]

During the progress of his campaign, Malik Kafur demolished all the Hindu temples, ravaged the territory of Mysore and despoiled the country.[4] One of such temples which were sacked was the temple of Rameshwaram, the well-known place of Hindu pilgrimage.[5] The miserable condition of the people of the Deccan continued unrelieved and unabated under the Bahamani dynasty. "The reign of the second Sultan Mohomed Shah I (1358-73) was chiefly occupied by savage wars waged against the Hindu rulers of Vijayanagar and Warangal. Horried cruelties were committed on both sides. The ferocious struggle continued until the Sultan is reported to have slain half a million of Hindus. The population was so much reduced that the Kanarese country did not recover for ages."[6] "In 1396[7] the dreadful famine distinguished from all others by the name of Durga Devi commenced in Maharashtra. It lasted according to Hindu legends for 12 years. At the end of that time the periodical rains returned; but whole districts were entirely depopulated and a very scanty revenue was obtained from the territory between the Godavari and Krishna for upwards of 30 years afterwards. The hill forts and strong places, previously conquered by the Mahomedans had fallen into the hands of polygars and robbers and the returning cultivators were driven from their villages."[8] Expeditions were sent to extirpate the banditti and to give security to the country. The outcome of the first expedition with which, an experienced Brahmin named Sadu Narsoo Kale had been sent to effect a revenue settlement, "was a mere temporary relief from the heavy contributions which the banditti of the Ghat Matha were in the habit of exacting". No effectual security was possible for the villages until all the hill forts were reduced but the two subsequent expeditions effected little. In the third expedition the Mohamaden troops under Mullick-ool Tijai were drawn into an ambush and treacherously massacred by the Maratha chief Shirke. The remainder of the Sultan's army retreated; the Shirke family retained possession of their territory and for a period of 16 years no further attempt was made to reduce this part of the country. Firoz, the 8th Sultan, was a fierce bigot who spent most of his time in pitiless wars against his Hindu neighbours "being determined to use his best endeavours in the suppression of infidelity and the strengthening of the faith".[9]

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[2] Quoted by V. A. Smith in *Oxford History of India*, p. 234.
[3] See *Oxford History of India*, p. 232.
[4] R. Sewell: *A Forgotten Empire*, p. 402.
[5] Ishwariprasad: *A Short History of Muslim Rule in India*, pp. 117-118.

The war with Vijayanagar continued in the reign of Ahmad Shah (1422-35) also. He waged the war "with savagery even greater than that shown by his predecessors. Ahmad Shah without waiting to besiege the Hindu capital overran the open country; and wherever he went he put to death men, women and children without mercy, contrary to the compact made by his uncle and predecessor Mahomed Shah and the Raja of Vijayanagar. Whenever the number of slain amounted to 20,000 he halted three days and made a festival in celebration of the bloody event. He broke down also the idolatrous temples and destroyed the colleges of Brahmins".[10] In 1474 a severe famine, known as the "Famine of Bijapur" devastated the Deccan and swept away a large population. "The rains failed for two years and when they came at last in the third year scarcely any farmer remained in the country to cultivate the lands."[11]

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[6] V. Smith: *Oxford History of India*, p. 276.
[7] G. S. Sardesai gives the date as 1468-75, see M. R., Vol. I, p. 118.
[8] Grant Duff: *History of the Marathas*, Vol. II, pp. 48-49.
[9] V. Smith: *Oxford History of India*, p. 276.

An illustration of the spirit of fanaticism prevailing in those times, can be had from the following account of Firista. He says, "The king having gone to view the fort broke down an idolatrous temple and killed some Brahmins who officiated at it with his own hands as a point of religion. He then gave orders for a mosque to be erected on the foundations of the temple and ascending the pulpit repeated a few prayers, distributed alms and commanded the Khutoba to be read in his name. Khwaja Mahomad Gawan now represented that as his Majesty has slain some infidels with his own hands he might fairly assume the title of Ghazi, an appellation of which he was very proud. Mahomed Shah was the first of his race who had slain a Brahmin." [12]

The above incident took place in 1481 when Kondapalli was surrendered to Mahomed Shah III. About the raid on Kanchi, Farista says, "The temple was attacked and carried by storm with great slaughter. An immense booty fell to the share of the visitors who took away nothing but gold, jewels and silver which were abundant. The king (Mahomed Shah III) then (1481) sacked the city of Kanchi and after remaining there for a week returned to his army." [13]

With the exception of the 5th Sultan, who was a peaceful man, all the Bahamani Kings including the founder of the dynasty Hasan Kangu, were ruthless in their attitude towards the Hindus. Even the able minister Mahomed Gairan, on whose character Meadows Taylor has showered so much praise, was not free from the fanatical spirit of the age and often took part in crusades against idolatry. When the Bahamani Kingdom came to be founded in 1347, "the New Sultan was obliged from his situation, to conciliate the people of the country, and he either bestowed hereditary lands and immunities on the leading men or confirmed them in those they already enjoyed as Deshmukhs and Deshpandes. He likewise appears to have conferred some subordinate military ranks on a few of the chiefs and to have appropriated lands in jahagir for the maintenance of small bodies of horse; but such lands seem to have always been within the jurisdiction of some greater Mohamedan Jahagirdar, himself subordinate to the governor of a great province".[14] Similarly the Marathas, for their better knowledge and experience in revenue matters were inevitably employed in the lower branches of administration. The nobles lived in great magnificence but the lot of the common people was hard and miserable. The Russian merchant, Nikitin, tells us, "The land is overstocked with people; but those in the country are very miserable while the nobles are extremely opulent and delight in luxury." Such was the condition of the Marathas under the rule of the Bahamani Dynasty. "The Bahamani Sultans failed in the atrocious attempt made more than once by the members of the dynasty to exterminate the Hindu population of the Deccan or in default of extermination to drive it by force into the fold of Islam. They succeeded in killing hundreds of thousands of men, women and children and in making considerable number of 'converts'; but in spite of all their efforts the population continues to be Hindus in the main. Large numbers of Persian, Turks, Arab and Mughals settled in the country and formed unions with native women. Many Hindu families also were forcibly converted and the continuance of Muslim dynasties in large areas for centuries has kept up or even increased the proportion of the Muslim minority. The monuments of Hindu civilization certainly suffered severely."[15]

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[10] Ibid, p. 277.

[11] V. Smith: *Oxford History of India*, p. 280.

[12] Ibid, p. 280.

[13] Ibid, p. 281. Sewell considers the story exceedingly improbable on the ground that the distance was 250 miles and the way lay through the heart of a hostile country. See "*A Forgotten Empire*", p. 101.

The condition of the Marathas remained much the same under the five independent principalities that sprang from the dismemberment of the Bahamani Kingdom. A gradual improvement took place in the case of the upper classes towards the end of the 16th century and in the beginning of the 17th century. Several Maratha families came to possess considerable importance and influence in the three great Muslim states which divided the Deccan at this period.

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[14] Grant Duff: *History of the Marathas,* Vol. I, p. 46.

[15] V. Smith: *Oxford History of India,* p. 284.

"The revenues under all the Muslim states seem generally to have been farmed out in small portions in some parts of the country by single villages; where they were not farmed the management appears to have been generally entrusted to Hindoo agency."[16] Grant Duff further says the condition of the Marathas in the early part of those dynasties continued much the same as it had been under the Bahamani kings. The hill forts seem generally to have been garrisoned by Marathas; they were sometimes in the immediate pay of government and sometimes in charge of the Jahagirdars and district Deshmukhs; a few places of great strength were always reserved by the king by whom the killedars or governors were appointed. A certain rank depending on the number of a body of horse under an individual's command and which rank is termed by Mohamedans munsubs was frequently conferred on Maratha Chiefs and military jahagirs, or lands given for the purpose of maintaining a body of troops, were granted for their support. The quota of troops so furnished was very small in proportion to the size of the jahagir; but the Maratha chiefs could procure horse at a short notice and they were entertained or discharged at pleasure —a great convenience to a wasteful and an improvident government. Titles were conferred upon many of the Marathas but under the Deccan dynasties such titles were generally ancient Hindu appellations. Raja, Naik, and Rao were the most common and though bestowed by their Mahomedan conquerors, the distinction was always exceedingly gratifying to the Marathas especially as they invariably obtained with the title the means of supporting their new rank."[17]

"The Marathas were naturally much more numerous in the armies of Bijapur and Ahmednagar as these kingdoms extended over almost the whole of Maharashtra but some of them served in the army of Golconda. Neither national sentiment nor unity of language and religion, prevented their fighting against each other. Not only did Maratha subjects of these governments stand in array opposed to each other but the most active enmity was frequently evinced between members of the same family. They fought with rancour wherever individual dispute or hereditary feuds existed; and that spirit of rivalry in families which was fomented by the kings of the Bahamani dynasty was one means of keeping the Marathas poised against each other in the dynasties which succeeded them." [18]

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[16] Grant Duff: *History of the Marathas,* Vol. I, p. 67.

[17] Ibid, pp. 68-69.

The period between the establishment of the five separate states and the rise of the Maratha State, witnessed incessant internal fighting between the five kingdoms for enlarging the limit of their respective principalities. During these troubled times they also carried on continued warfare, either singly or in alliance, with their neighbours, the Portuguese, the Mughal Emperors and the Vijayanagar Empire which ceased to play any important part in the Deccan affairs after the Battle of Talikote in 1565. The important bearing of the history of Vijayanagar on the course of the Deccan politics seems to have been generally neglected by Maratha Historians. The Hindu Empire of Vijayanagar was set up as a barrier to check the onrush of the armies of Islam to the South; and to preserve Hindu Dharma. "Everything seemed to be leading up to but one inevitable end—the ruin and devastation of the Hindu provinces, the annihilation of their old royal houses, the destruction of their religion, their temples, their cities. All that the dwellers in the South held most dear seemed tottering to its fall. Suddenly about the year A.D. 1344 there was a check to this wave of foreign invasion—a stop—a halt—then a solid wall of opposition; and for 250 years Southern India was saved." [19] Sewell says, "It was the natural result of the persistent efforts made by the Muhammadans to conquer all India. When these dreaded invaders reached the Krishna River the Hindus to their South, stricken with terror, combined and gathered in haste to the new standard which alone seemed to offer some hope of protection. The decayed old states crumbled away into nothingness and the fighting kings of Vijayanagar became the saviours of the South for two and a half centuries."[20] The Vijayanagar empire from the nature of its origin was constantly at war with the Deccan Sultans and "in the end the Muslims, who were more vigorous, better mounted and better armed than the Hindus, won the long contest."

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[18] Ibid, pp. 70-71.
[19] Sewell: *A Forgotten Empire*, p. 5.

In 1564 the Sultans of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar and Golkonda and Bidar, for once dropped their private quarrels and combined against the haughty Rama Raja. The battle of Talikota was fought in 1565 and the Hindus were completely defeated.

"The plunder was so great that every private man in the allied army became rich in gold, jewels, effects, tents, arms, horses and slaves as the Sultans left every person in possession of what he had acquired, only taking elephants for their own use." The confederate Muslim powers then proceeded to wreak their vengeance on the capital and the magnificent city was sacked with such thoroughness that the pathetic scenes of its desolation must be described in the words of Sewell. When after the defeat the craven princes fled with their treasures, "Then a panic seized the city. The truth became at last apparent. This was not a defeat merely, it was a cataclysm. All hope was gone. The myriad dwellers in the city were left defenceless. No retreat, no flight was possible except to a few for the pack oxen and carts had almost all followed the forces to the war and they had not returned. Nothing could be done but to bury all treasures, to arm the younger men and to wait. Next day the place became a prey to the robber tribes and jungle people of the neighbourhood. Hordes of Brinjaris, Lambadis, Kurubas and the like pounced down on the hapless city and looted the stores and shops carrying off great quantities of riches. Conto states that there were six concerted attacks by these people during the day."

"The third day saw the beginning of the end. The victorious Mussalmans had halted on the field of battle for rest and refreshment but now they had reached the capital and from that time forward for a space of five months Vijayanagar knew no rest. The enemy had come to destroy and then carried out their object relentlessly. They slaughtered the people without mercy; broke down the temples and palaces; and wreaked such savage vengeance on the abode of the kings that, with the exception of a few great stone-built temples and walls nothing now remains but a heap of ruins to mark the spot where once the stately buildings stood. They demolished the statues and even succeeded in breaking the limbs of the huge Narasinha monolith. Nothing seemed to escape them. They broke up the pavilions standing on the huge platform from which the kings used to watch the festivals and overthrew all the carved work. They lit huge fires in the magnificently decorated buildings, forming the temple of Vithalswami near the river and smashed its exquisite stone sculptures. With fire and sword, with crowbars and axes, they carried on day after day their work of destruction. Never perhaps in the history of the world has such havoc been wrought, and wrought so suddenly, on so splendid a city; teeming with a wealthy and industrious population in the full plenitude of prosperity one day, on the next seized, pillaged and reduced to ruins, amid scenes of savage massacre and horrors beggaring description." Thus did the mighty "city of Victory", the last resort in the Deccan, "of the outcastes, refugees and fighting men of Hindus, beaten and driven out of their old strongholds by the advancing Muhammadans" come to a most pathetic end.[22]

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[20] *A Forgotten Empire,* pp. 1-2—Introduction.
[21] V. Smith: *Oxford History of India,* p. 301.

The utter destruction of Vijayanagar accompanied by unheard of barbarities must have left a deep impression on the minds of the Deccani Hindus. Talikota was for the Marathas the Panipat of the 16th century. For generations the memory of the fallen city must have roused feelings of bitter resentment against the Muslim oppressors. To the hatred of the foreign rule created by the economic depression and the consequent wretched conditions of life of the unregarded Hindu peasantry, this effacement of the only visible symbol of Hindu independence must have added a poignant sense of shame and sorrow. Every Hindu must have felt the loss of the marvellous capital of the only Hindu Empire of those times, as a personal catastrophe and the thoughts of the helpless populace must have turned to Heaven. They must have secretly prayed for the coming of a deliverer to free from the Muslim yoke. The rise of Shivaji the Great in the 17th century must have appeared to the simple-minded Marathas of those days as the fulfilment of their cherished desires at the hands of a merciful providence. Talikota served as a philippic to the political aspirations of the people of Maharashtra, which were gradually taking shape in their minds.

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[22] Sewell: *A Forgotten Empire,* pp. 206-208.

The downfall of the Vijayanagar Empire was followed by anarchy and misrule and the Muslim conquerors who were elated at the ruin of their formidable antagonist and rival soon began to lose their vigour. The fear of Vijayanagar had kept them alert and active. But once this common terror[23] vanished, their mutual jealousies appeared again and their old quarrels returned.

After Talikota the only other circumstance of importance which had a great influence on the Deccan history is the invasions of the Mughal Emperors, which began towards the end of the 16th century under Akbar and ended in the annexation of the Deccan Sultanates by Aurangzeb. "The Mughal invasions for the purpose of reducing the kingdoms of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golconda had a great influence on the rise of the Marathas."[24]

It had been the ambition of every great ruler of Delhi to conquer the Deccan and the attempt always led to disastrous consequences. At the time when the great Akbar was planning the subversion of the Deccan monarchies, the Kingdom of Ahmednagar was a prey to domestic feuds. Taking advantage of this situation, the Mughals began their operation in 1593. The gallant Chand Bibi defended the city of Ahmednagar with conspicuous bravery but that did not avail and she was forced in 1596 to cede Berar to the Mughals. War broke out again and as Chand Bibi had been treacherously murdered, there was now none to protect the city from falling into Mughal hands. Ahmednagar was therefore taken by assault in 1600 and the young prince was sent a prisoner to the hill fort of Gwalior. The fall of the capital, however, did not procure the submission of the Nizamshahi state and under the able and wise guidance of the renowned Abyssinian, Mulik Ambar, the Kingdom of Ahmednagar continued to defy the Mughals and their allies, the Bijapur Adilshai kings for 20 years and more. This minister set up a new king under the title of Murtiza Nizam Shah II, transferred the court to Daulatabad, introduced a judicious revenue system in the kingdom, and maintained for some years yet the tottering Nizamshahi government on its legs. Profiting by the dissensions in the Mughal camp, Malik Ambar repeatedly defeated the Mughal armies and retook Ahmednagar. Affairs in the Deccan became so serious that at last in 1617 Jahangir sent his son Shah Jehan with a great army to reconquer the lost ground. Shah Jehan found the state of Deccan affairs very favourable. The ascendency of Malik Ambar had given rise to jealousy among his confederates, and even his own officers. The king of Bijapur was consequently easily detached from the confederacy and some of the Maratha nobles who were the mainstay of the Nizamshahi dynasty at this period were induced to go over to the Mughals. The most important defection was that of Lakhuji Jadhav and a mansab of 24,000 horse was conferred on him. The magnitude of power and importance to which the Marathas had risen by this time can be seen from the manner in which the Mughals thus received and rewarded Lakhuji Jadhav. This happened in 1621. Shahaji Bhonsaley alone of the great Maratha nobles did not desert his patron, Malik Ambar. Forsaken by the other Maratha chiefs, Malik Ambar was compelled to restore the fort of Ahmednagar and all the other territory which he had reconquered from the Mughals. But no sooner was the attention of the imperial troops again called off to Delhi, than Malik Ambar, in spite of his recent defeat, rallied his forces and once more triumphed in the Deccan. His end, however, came prematurely in 1626 and the only man who, with the loyal services of Shahaji, could have offered successful resistance to the invaders from the North was removed from the field of action. Malik Ambar's death was an irreparable blow to the Nizamshahi Government. The new regent, Fatteh Khan, the eldest son of Malik Ambar possessed none of his father's abilities and in the war with the Mughals that followed the Nizamshahi was saved only by the timely peace that Khan Jahan Lodi, then governor of the

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[23] Some idea of the Muslim fear of Rama Raja can be gathered from Colonel Brigg's note written in 1829 and quoted by Sewell on p. 205. It says, " we see a sculptured representation of Ramraj's head at the present day serving as the opening of one of the sewers of the citadel of Bijapur; and we know that the head, annually covered with oil and red pigment has been exhibited to the pious Muslims of Ahmednagar on the anniversary of the battle for the last 250 years." Such was the joy at his death.

[24] Grant Duff: *History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, p. 78.

Mughal conquests in the Deccan, chose to conclude with the new Regent on very favourable terms. Murteza Nizam Shah II, on attaining his majority, was inclined to act for himself but he was vindictive and totally unfit for the difficult situations in which misfortune placed him. Had it not been for the violent and arbitrary ways of the equally incompetent Fatteh Khan, he would have remained a mere pageant in the hands of Malik Ambar's son. Murteza assisted by an officer Takrib Khan, imprisoned the new regent and conducted the administration himself. Lakhuji Jadhav Rao now offered to come over to the side of his old master but Murteza treacherously murdered him for his former desertion, with his son and several relatives. Khan Jahan Lodi's rebellion, at this time, further complicated the Deccan affairs. Shah Jehan, the new emperor since 1627, bore a personal enmity to him. He was therefore removed from the Deccan command, and transferred to Malwa. He was invited to court but certain circumstances roused his suspicions and fearing treachery he fled into the Deccan and joined his old ally the king of Ahmednagar. A force was immediately ordered to pursue him but the Jahagirdars and Deshmukhs of the country espoused his cause. The affairs now assumed such a serious aspect that Shah Jehan considered his submission quite necessary to the security of his throne. He took the field in person and marched towards the Deccan at the head of a great army. Shah Jehan then issued a proclamation, threatening all, who would give protection to Lodi, with destruction. To suit the desultory mode of Deccan warfare, Shah Jehan divided his army into three parts and sent them into the hostile territory. Azim Khan, the most active of the Mughal commanders, soon compelled Lodi to fly to the south. Driven from the western part of the Ahmednagar Kingdom, Khan Jehan continued to elude the imperialists by moving from place to place and sometimes by defending favourable positions, and succeeded in reaching Bijapur. His idea was to persuade Mahomed Adil Shah to make common cause with Murteza Nizam Shah in repelling the Mughal invaders. But Mahomed Adil Shah was not inclined to listen to his arguments and he was obliged to return to the king of Ahmednagar once more. Azim Khan marched to Dowlatabad. The army of Nizam Shah had taken a strong position but being outnumbered was defeated after a resolute defence. Hopeless of getting any success, Khan Jehan tried to make his way to Kabul but the Mughal army pursued him relentlessly and soon overtook him. In utter despair he turned on his enemies, superior in numbers, defended himself with his usual gallantry and fell fighting at the head of his loyal band.

Shahaji had been one of the supporters of Lodi and on his defeat and death he thought it prudent to tender his submission to Shah Jehan to save his jahagir. The Emperor on his side saw the advantages of the active co-operation of such a powerful and able general like Shahaji in his object of reducing the Ahmednagar kingdom and the necessary promise of a safe conduct and pardon being forthwith given to him, Shahaji entered the Mughal service. He was received with great honour and was promoted to the rank of 5,000 horse.[25] He was confirmed in his jahagir and in addition received some other districts.[26] Shahaji's cousin, Khelloji Bhonsley, also received a mansab at this time.

The war with Nizam Shah did not terminate with the removal of the original cause. During 1629-30 a great famine desolated the Deccan. "It began from a failure of the periodical rains in A.D. 1629 and was raised to a frightful pitch by a recurrence of the same misfortune in 1630. Thousands of people emigrated and many perished before they reached the more favoured provinces; vast numbers died at home; whole districts were depopulated and some had not recovered at the end of 40 years. The famine was accompanied by a total failure of forage and by the death of all the cattle; and the miseries of the people were completed by a pestilence such as is usually the consequence of the other calamities."[27]

To the horrors of famine and pestilence were added the furies of the Mughal war. Azim Khan followed the advantages which his victory opened to him, by taking possession of the districts and by appointing his own adherents in place of the jahagirdars and mansabdars of the Nizam Shahi Kingdom. Morteza Nizam Shah easily attributed all these disasters to the misconduct of his minister rather than to the defects of his administration. He, therefore, released Futteh Khan from his captivity and restored him to power. The deposed vazir went over to the Mughals and received the rank of 6,000 horse in the imperial service.

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[25] Some of the Maratha chroniclers mention Shahaji's mansab as a command of 22,000 horse but Khafi Khan values it as 6,000 personal and 5,000 horse—(Elloit VII, p. 15). It would seem the Maratha chroniclers have exaggerated the value of the mansab.

[26] These districts probably include Ahmednagar to which Shivaji later on laid claim.

[27] M. Elphinstone: *History of India*, p. 566.

The prospect of the subversion of the neighbouring monarchy alarmed Mahomed Adil Shah and he declared war on the Mughals. But his help came too late to be of any use to Murteza Nizam Shah. Futteh Khan, unmindful of any other consideration but former injuries, caused his master to be strangled and his chief adherents to be put to death. He then sent an offer of his submission to Shah Jehan and placed an infant on the throne professing that he was to hold his authority subject to the Emperor's pleasure. Shah Jehan accepted the terms and gave his permission to carry on the administration in the name of the young Sultan in the restricted territories assigned to him and also granted a jahagir to Futteh Khan. In this grant were included some of Shahaji's districts. At this treatment Shahaji got so much disgusted that he set about to carve out an independent principality for himself.[28]

As a first step in this direction, he made overtures to the Bijapur government through Murarpant, an able Brahmin and the chief minister of Mahomed Adil Shah. A plan to take Daulatabad was approved as originally suggested by Shahaji and the Bijapur army was placed under the command of Shahaji. Futteh Khan on hearing of this move proposed to put himself under the protection of the Mughals and to give up the fort. Shah Jehan ordered Mohabat Khan who had now assumed the command to march to the aid of Futteh Khan. In the battle that ensued Shahaji put forth his best efforts but he was finally driven back and forced to retreat owing to the superior numbers of the Mughals.[29] Futteh Khan now broke with Mughals. Mohabat Khan, therefore, determined on regularly investing the fort and punishing this unwarranted breach of faith on the part of Futteh Khan. After an uneventful siege of 58 days the garrison capitulated in A.D. 1633. Futteh Khan was divested of all power and pensioned off while the king whom he had set up was placed in confinement at Gwalior.

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[28] Elliot, VII, pp. 36-37.
[29] Elliot, VII, p. 37.

The king of Bijapur was now left alone to carry on the war with the Mughals. The resourceful king continued to defend himself with his usual energy and ability and all the efforts of Mohabat Khan were not enough to subdue him. At the siege of Perinda, the Mughals were not only repulsed but were forced to retreat to Burhanpur and to be on the defensive. Mohabat Khan had been previously put under the nominal command of Prince Shuja and now both were recalled for their failure at Perinda. At this stage, the Mughal conquests in the Deccan were divided into two commands under Khan Dowran and Khan Zoman. These officers were even less successful than their predecessors. Mahomed Adil Shah continued to hold out. Shahaji on the other hand revived, under his own regency, the Nizam Shahi monarchy which seemed to have come to an end on the surrender of Futteh Khan. After the fall of Dowlatabad Shahaji retreated to the rugged country in the west of the Deccan and after some time was so strong as to be able to set up another prince as the lawful heir of Nizam Shah and to occupy all the districts of that kingdom from the sea to the capital, in the name of the new king. The Deccan remained as unsubdued as ever. Shah Jehan was so much exasperated by this highly unsatisfactory situation that he prepared a great army under his personal command and made up his mind to bring matters to a speedy settlement, even if it should involve the reduction of the other kingdom in the Deccan. According to his usual practice Shah Jehan divided his army into different divisions and sent them to recover the kingdom of Ahmednagar from Shahaji, in the first instance.

Shahaji maintained a desultory warfare against the imperialists for a considerable time and assisted by the Bijapur troops continued to harass by his attacks or elude by his vigilance the army sent in his pursuit. In the end, however, the overwhelming numbers of the Emperor prevailed and he was drawn from his open country and many of his principal forts were taken. Shah Jehan then turned his whole force on Bijapur and took several forts, but when the Mughals approached his capital, the talented Mahomed Adil Shah once more laid the country waste for 20 miles round Bijapur and like the Dutch, emptied the reservoirs of water beyond the walls of the fort, thus making an attack on the capital impossible for want of provisions. The imperialists therefore took to plundering and systematically devastating the territory. They destroyed several towns, carried off the inhabitants as prisoners and continued every species of depredation. "The march of the Mughals was everywhere marked by flames and desolations."[30] The Bijapur troops frequently acted with great energy but both parties were, before long, tired of this method of warfare and Adil Shah, not liking the total ruin of his country, sued for peace. A treaty was concluded on terms much more favourable than he possibly could have hoped to get under the circumstances. He agreed to pay an annual tribute of 20 lakhs of pagodas (hons) and received a portion of the Nizam Shahi territory. Shahaji with his followers was to receive pardon on his surrendering the forts in his possession and all his artillery and military stores. In case of non-compliance he was to be expelled from the Bijapur territory and declared the common enemy of both states. Shahaji continued the unequal contest for some time longer but at length he also submitted, gave up the young prince and retired in 1637 into the service of Adil Shah as directed by Shah Jehan. Thus finally ended the Nizam Shahi Dynasty. In the beginning of this campaign Shah Jehan had overawed the king of Golconda to agree to pay a regular tribute. Shahaji's resources, abilities, and military prowess were known to the king of Bijapur and the statesmen of his court. He was therefore readily received in the service of Bijapur and confirmed in possession of Poona and Supa, two districts of his family jahagir, which by the last treaty had been handed over to the Bijapur state. At this time the Bijapur government had taken in hand the settlement of the newly acquired districts between the Bhima and the Nira and as Shahaji happened to know very well this tract, he was asked to assist the general in the undertaking.[31] In this, Shahaji gave additional proofs of his talents and genius if they were required and rendered such conspicuous service, that he was strongly recommended to the king, on their return to the court, for further favours.

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[30] G. Duff: *History of the Marathas,* pp. 97-98.

[31] According to Grant Duff who has followed the Marathi mss. Shahaji's first campaign under Bijapur Government took place as an assistant of Murarpant (1637). But Prof. Sirkar basing his opinion on the account given in Basatin-i-salatin has proved in his article in the modern review (Sept. 1917) that Murar was executed about the year 1636.

Accordingly Shahaji was nominated Deputy (second-in-command) under his friend Ranadulla Khan who was being sent in 1638 to the Karnatic to subjugate the Hindu polygars in that quarter. Shahaji was promised a jahagir out of the conquered territory. These Karnatic wars kept Shahaji busy for 30 years during which time he conquered Mysore, Vellore and Gingi and several other smaller states. He also forced the naiks of Madura and Tanjore to acknowledge the suzerain authority of the Bijapur Government and pay tribute. In consequence of his eminent services in Karnatic, Shahaji obtained the promised jahagir which included Bangalore, Kollar and Seera or Cutta and other places in Mysore in 1648. His Poona Jahagir likewise received the addition of Indapur, Baramati and Maval. Probably with a view to bind him to the Adilshahi Dynasty by an interest in different parts of the Kingdom, as Grant Duff says, Mahomed Adil Shah conferred on him a royal grant for the Deshmukhee of 22 villages in the Karhad District.

In the service of the Bijapur State, Shahaji at last found a good field for the display of his talents and it seems, from his official management of that province, that he had not given up the idea of declaring his independence, should a favourable opportunity present itself.

The province of Karnatic lately annexed to the Bijapur kingdom was full of disorder and the task of establishing the authority of Bijapur on a sound basis was entrusted to him. Shahaji, the new governor, stamped out the disorderly elements and his new revenue arrangement resulted in the happiness and prosperity of the people and a considerable addition to the royal treasury. In this work he was assisted by Naro Punt Hanmante. "All Maratha officers of consequence invariably retain a number of Brahmins in their service as writers and men of business. These Brahmins, when occupied by ordinary duties are termed carcuns; but when sent on public business they are, in common with all envoys, styled wakils,"[32] Naro Punt was one of such men who, being displaced by the Mughals on occupying the country, now adhered to Shahaji in hopes of finding employment. Another of this description was Dadoji Kondev who had charge of his jahagir at Poona and his family. Shahaji had learnt his lessons in finance from Malik Ambar and it was now his object in applying those lessons to Karnatic to cultivate the love and friendly sympathy of the subjects. He was also careful in sending the annual quota of revenue to Bijapur regularly and to retain the surplus with himself. Shahaji enjoyed his jahagir for life and added to it from time to time. When his son's rebellious attitude became more pronounced and it became impossible for the Bijapur Government to ignore Shivaji any longer, the Bijapur court suspected collusion between father and son. Shahaji's assurance did not allay these suspicions. The virtual independence that he had secured for himself in the Karnatic strengthened them and it was resolved to punish vicariously Shahaji for his son's sins as is generally the case with foreign rulers. To them, it appeared to be the only means of restraining Shivaji.

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[32] G. Duff: *History of the Marathas*, p. 103.

Accordingly private orders were sent to Baji Ghorpade, Chief of Mudhol, to arrest Shahaji. Baji carried out this project by treachery. Shahaji was invited to an entertainment and was put under arrest.[33] Shahaji persisted in representing that there was no connection between him and his son, who was as much in rebellion against him as against the king and added that he should be reduced to obedience by force of arms. But nothing that he urged could satisfy Mahomed Adil Shah. He ordered Shahaji to be confined in a stone dungeon which was entirely closed except for a small aperture and told him that if within a certain time his son did not submit, this opening would be for ever closed. Shahaji was saved by Shivaji's perfect diplomacy on this occasion.[34] He afterwards recovered his governorship and was again sent to the Karnatic. Thus relieved from immediate danger Shahaji kept up apparently loyal relations with Bijapur but he never abandoned his plan of increasing his power so as to be able to declare some day his independence. Shahaji began to receive news from time to time of his son's successes in the noble cause of independence—a cause which was secretly nearest to his heart and yearned to see such a valiant son. But he did not get an opportunity till a truce was arranged between the Bijapur court and Shivaji when he received the King's permission to visit Maharashtra on condition that he was to return to Karnatic as soon as possible. This was his only visit to his son and that was the last. Father and son never met thereafter; Shahaji died within two years (1664).

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[33] Modak's history of the Adil Shahi dynasty (Marathi) gives a different version. He says that Shahaji was suddenly apprehended by Baji for insubordination.

[34] Some bakhars say that he was saved owing to the intervention of his old friend Ranadulla Khan.

A question now naturally arises: Why did not Shahaji who was quite capable himself declare his independence? The explanation must be sought in his circumstances. When Shahaji began to rise in his career in the service of the Nizam Shahi kingdom, the Deccan sultans in general and his master in particular supported by the genius of Malik Ambar, were yet strong. The idea of independence must have occurred to him in the troubled times after the Mughal invasion and by that time enough had happened to damp the ardour of his war-like spirit. He had been defeated and had to make his submission to Shah Jehan. His first essay in the direction of his plan was thus frustrated and he could at once see the serious consequences that might have followed, had he persisted in his cherished project. The Mughals and the Bijapuris would have easily hunted him down and the chance even for Shivaji would have been lost for ever. Shahaji was a cautious statesman and he wisely realised the possibilities of his situation. He was therefore content to secure a big jahagir and watch further events. He must also take into account the difference between the two personalities of Shahaji and Shivaji. Shahaji was not imbued with hatred for the Moslems to that extent to which, owing to his circumstances, his son was. He never felt the shame of foreign domination as keenly neither did he possess that boldness of conception, that resourcefulness in his methods, that daring, that originality, that youth, which were essential to the success of his dangerous ideal. His base of operations from Ahmednagar territory was inconvenient as being too near the frontiers of his enemies. That his conduct was shaped by the motive of declaring at a favourable opportunity his independence becomes clear when we consider how studiously he cultivated the friendship of the Karnatics, how he issued the sanads to the people of Karnatic in his own name and how he disclaimed downright any responsibility for his son's rebellion whom he declared to be as much disobedient to himself as to his king. But to any student of the Maratha history it should be apparent that Shahaji must have held Shivaji's acts to be in keeping with his own deeper projects.

Shivaji's ideal of Swarajya was an extension and a continuation of the same plan; only it took a more definite shape and was carried out under better auspices. Shahaji's failure was as much necessary to the success of Shivaji the Great as anything else, pointing as it did the ripeness of the times and conditions and the immense possibilities ahead. Shivaji the Great completed what was practically begun long ago by his father. But for Shahaji's important preliminary work the success of Shivaji the Great would have been doubtful. Allowing for difference of times, place, and situation, Shahaji was to Shivaji the Great what Frederick William was to Frederick the Great. Like Frederick William, Shahaji could have pointed out his son to the Mughals as the avenger of his defeats and insults. Rightly has Shahaji been called a king-maker;[35] but his greatness was eclipsed by the renown of his more illustrious son.

The career of Shahaji Bhonsley bringing out plainly the importance which the several Maratha families were gradually gaining in the history of the Deccan in the beginning of the 17th century just before the rise of Shivaji the Great, who was the founder of the independent Maratha State. The early Muslim writers seem to be unaware of the existence of the Marathas. The word Maratha occurs for the first time in Ferishta, when he describes the transactions of the year A.D. 1485 and does not then seem to have been applied in a general sense. In the middle of the 16th century, when the process of decay began for the Deccan sultans, quite a good number of Marathas was employed in the service of the three Deccan kingdoms, either for revenue or military purpose but in subordinate positions. They were at first mainly employed in the lowest military capacity, that of garrisoning the forts; by degrees, their special aptitude for service as light cavalry so useful for the guerilla warfare, was discovered and they came to be given high military commands. During the wars of

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[35] See Sardesai: *History of Modern India*, Part II, Vol. I, p. 150. Ranade: *Rise of the Maratha Power*, p. 36.

Malik Ambar, the Marathas in his service distinguished themselves frequently and their prestige rose very high in the beginning of the 17th century. Shahaji Bhonsley in particular who had succeeded his father Malloji played a creditable part in the great battle fought by Malik Ambar in 1620 against the Mughals. Lakhuji Jadhav Rao whose daughter Jijabai had been married to Shahaji, was another of these famous Maratha families of this period. Jadhav Rao was a captain of 10,000 horse under Malik Ambar and had attained to such consequence that his desertion to Shah Jehan turned the fate of a war against his former master. There were other families as well which rose to both civil and military power. Murarrao and Madan Pandit were famous ministers at Golkonda. The Raj-Rai family also was of considerable importance in Kutubshahi. Brahmin Deshpandes and Maratha Deshmukhs were in charge of district collection and the names of Dado Narso Kale and Yesu Pandit are famous for the reforms they introduced in Bijapur revenue system. Ahmednagar kings employed Brahmin ambassadors as envoys in the courts of Gujarat and Malva. Similarly Murar Rao Jagdeo, Kamalsen, Yesu Pandit, Akanna and Makanna were noted ministers. In the military department, the predominant Maratha families were the Nimbalkars of Phalton, the Ghadges of Malawdi, the Manes of Mhaswad, the Savants of Wadi, the Dafles of Jat, the Mores of Javli, the Ghorpades of Kapsee and Mudhol, the Shirkes, the Mahadiks, the Mohites and the Gujars. These were great commanders, some of these being in charge of ten to twenty thousand horse. "Thus, about the commencement of the 17th century the nominal Mahomedan Rulers of Golkonda, Bijapur, Nagar and Bedar were virtually controlled both in civil and military departments by Maratha statesmen and Maratha warriors and the hill forts near the Ghats and the country thereabout were in the hands of Maratha jahagirdars who were only nominally dependent upon these Mahomedan sovereigns."[36] Thus the Marathas were being finely trained in the arts of war and civil administration—a training which admirably fitted them for the future responsibilities.

From the foregoing review of the Deccan affairs during the three centuries of the Muslim rule in Maharashtra, two or three facts clearly emerge. Politically the Marathas were under foreign rule and they had been reduced to the position of tax-gatherers of the foreign dynasties. At the commencement of the 17th century a few military jahagirdars or feudal barons had come to the fore but even some of these were not satisfied with their position of subordinate vasals and efforts, though unsuccessful, were being made to assert their independence. The careers of Shahaji Bhonsley, Jagdeorao, Kadamrao, and some other smaller jahagirdars show that they were making individual attempts to free themselves from the Muslim suzerainty. It was because they were actuated by personal motives; it was because they had no ideal to present to the masses—an ideal potent enough to stir their latent powers and yoke them to the service of a common cause—that they failed and Maharashtra had to wait till the extraordinary genius of Shivaji the Great united them in a patriotic struggle for emancipation. "In short, for nearly 75 years before the birth of Shivaji, the Marathas were trying to gain their freedom."[37] Economically the condition of the Marathas was very wretched. The petty jahagirdars and the middle class of Deshmukhs and Deshpandes—and Shivaji the Great was one of this class—must have had sympathy with the misery of the lower classes as they themselves had a due share of this depressed economic condition. Even the dawn of the 17th century did not bring any improvement in their material condition; they had to remain contented with their usual percentage as agents of the Deccan kings for collecting the revenue dues. In those days, agriculture was the only source of income for most of the Marathas and there was no ghost of a chance for agriculture to flourish in the unsettled condition of the Deccan of that period. The excessive taxation and the vast booty that was taken to Delhi in Allaudin Khilji's times impoverished the people under the Bahamani Dynasty; repeated massacres of the Hindus and their wars with Vijayanagar aggravated the situation. Since Talikota, the wars in the south ceased but the internal wars began and the Portuguese also came on the scene and devastated the country from Goa to Miraj. Then came the wars with the Mughals. We have already seen how in these wars devastation of enemy territory was resorted to as a military strategy and how the utter ruin of his subjects had induced the king of Bijapur to sue for peace. Frequent famines accompanied with terrible epidemics swept away large masses of the poor peasantry and for years afterwards there were not enough men to cultivate the land. Large tracts of land became deserts and had to be populated from time to time. Such was the human toll, these continuous wars, these massacres, these great famines and pestilences exacted. We know in what condition Dadoji Konddev found his master's Poona Jahagir and what measures he had to take to bring prosperity to the districts once more. Agriculture could not flourish in the nature of things and the ruin of the peasantry was complete. The prosperity of the middle class depended largely on the prosperity of the peasants and the ruin of the one involved seriously the other also. The grave discontent and disaffection caused by their low economic stamina, were fed by conversions, demolitions of temples, cow-slaughters and other religious pin-pricks so highly irritating to the minds of the Hindus. There can be no doubt that religious persecution, which offended against their most cherished prejudices, played its due part in making the Marathas heartily hate the alien government in spite of the fact that such persecution was on the wane towards the latter half of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th century. All this discontent was made active and the desire for Swarajya was made more pronounced by the literary and the religious movement that was being worked out by the saints and poets of Maharashtra during this period. But the influence of this movement was indirect and we are going to assess its value in a subsequent chapter. It certainly has its place in the formation of the Swarajya ideal but a great deal of the popular ferment must be attributed to the economic causes. Prof. Rawlinson says, "The chief cause of unrest in India is usually economic,"[38] and it was true at least in the days of Shivaji the Great. The Marathas certainly looked upon Swarajya as we do at the present day as the panacea for economic ills. Thus the political and economic conditions were ripe for a revolutionary movement and this was fathered by Shivaji the Great. In the next chapter we shall see how the ideal of Swarajya was formed and how and by what methods it was successfully realised.

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[36] Ranade: *Rise of the Maratha Power,* p. 36.

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[37] Sardesai: *History of Modern India*, Part II, Vol. I, p. 125.

[38] *Shivaji the Maratha*, p. 95.

CHAPTER III

SHIVAJI THE GREAT AND THE FOUNDATION OF THE MARATHA STATE

How was the political ideal formed? What were the influences at work? How far did he succeed in achieving his object and by what methods? What were his difficulties? What were his achievements? Was Shivaji the Great a rebel? These are some of the questions that we propose to consider in this chapter.

In the first quarter of the 17th century, the minds of the people of Maharashtra were in a most disturbed and unsettled condition. The chief political feature about the time Shivaji the Great was born and during the period of his boyhood was, as we have seen in the last chapter, the advancing tide of the Mughal conquest. The trail of destruction and desolation, fire and plunder that the march of the Mughal armies left behind contributed mainly to the production of that economic misery which, joined to other factors, caused a first class political explosion in the Deccan. The people were in so eager a state of expectancy that their thoughts naturally turned to the idea of the coming of a deliverer.[1] The man of destiny was born in April 1627 [2] in the hill-fort of Shivneri where his mother Jijabai (a daughter of the aristocratic Lakhuji Jadhavrao of Sindhkhed) had been left by Shahaji for safety; Shahaji had just escaped from Daulatabad which was at that time being invested by the Mughals and was being hotly pursued by his father-in-law Lakhuji Jadhavrao. During the period 1630-36 Shahaji was a fugitive, subject to frequent change of place and enemy attacks.

This period, owing to the Mughal harassment of the country, was a time of cares and anxieties for mother and son and it required all the mother's care and vigilance to save the son from falling into the hands of their Muslim enemies. She foiled the attempts of the Mughals to capture her son by shifting from fort to fort but was herself seized in 1633 and it is probably on the plea of her husband's neglect that she was soon afterwards released. It seems by this time she had lost her husband's love and Shahaji [3] abandoned her and her new-born son and showed all his favour to Tuka Bai Mohite, his more youthful and beautiful second wife and her Vyankoji.

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[1] Col. Wilkes speaks of a prophesy in his " History of Mysore ", pp. 42-43.

[2] There are discrepancies about the date in the various bakhars. Of the exact date of his birth there is no contemporary record. The Maratha Bakhars place his birth on the 6th April 1627 or thereabout. Rawlinson gives May (1627) as the month—Shivaji the Maratha, p. 28. So also Grant Duff, p. 102. See also Rajwade *Marathyanchya Itihasanchi Sadhane*. Sardesai and other modern historians give April 1627 as the year, see *Marathi Riyasat* (Purwardh), p. 158.

For the first ten years of his life, young Shivaji had no other protection but that of Jijabai; her son was for her the only joy and consolation and thus a deep attachment sprang up between mother and son. They were soon transferred to Poona jahagir under the guardianship of Dadoji Kondadev,[4] a faithful Brahmin officer to whom also the management of these Jahagirs was entrusted by Shahaji.

The circumstances of storm and stress which prevailed in Maharashtra at the time of his birth had a great effect on the formation of young Shivaji's character. Jijabai was a proud and spirited lady; even in those days of her misfortune she did not think of seeking the protection of her father's roof.[5] She must have contracted a great hatred for the Mughals to whose invasion her troubles were due; this hatred was reinforced by the treacherous murder of her father and brother by the vindictive king of Ahmednagar, by the frequent sights of cow-killing, the desecration of temples and shrines, the insults of the Brahmins and the violation of the honour of Hindu women; and she must have taught her son to hate them likewise. This can be seen from the open contempt he showed for the Muslims by his refusing when taken to court, to prostrate himself before the

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[3] Mr. Takakhav and Keluskar do not believe in the theory of a disagreement between Shivaji's parents—see p. 66. But other historians believe it to be true. See Sardesai *Marathi Riyasat* (Purwardha), p. 159. G. Duff, p. 103. Kincaid and Parasnis: History of the Maratha People, pp. 16, 18, 20. Ranade, p. 62. Sarcar: Shivaji and his times, p. 21. Mr. C. V. Vaidya also disbelieves the theory. See Shivaji the Founder of the Maratha Swarajya, p. 40.

[4] Dadoji was patwari of Multhan, a mouza of Poona Prant. He is afterwards mentioned in records as " subhedar, Fort Kondana " or " Muzumdar, Junnar Subha "—See Rajwade, Vol. XVIII, p. 19.

[5] G. Duff says she retired to some of her relatives—See Vol. I, p. 102, which seems to be wrong—refer to Takakhav and Keluskar, p. 55 and Rawlinson: *Shivaji the Maratha,* p. 28.

Bijapur king as required by Muslim etiquette. He used to content himself on such occasions with an informal salaam.[6] He also got himself involved more than once in disputes over the question of cow killing; he would attack[7] the butchers in the streets and free their victims. Rawlinson says, " In this, we may be sure, Shivaji was instigated by his mother." [8] A resolute, self-respecting woman, she always felt the indignity of foreign subjugation; she ever remembered that her forefathers had been, before the coming of the yavanas, the rulers of the land and did not much like the idea of her husband's fighting in the cause of Islam.[9] She would not allow Shivaji to be married[10] at Bijapur " lest the Muslims might defile the ceremony by their presence." Such were her feelings with respect to the Muslim rulers of her country and Shivaji the Great in his early years fully shared his mother's sentiments. As the boy watched the persecution of the bigoted Bijapur Capital, the ideal of overthrowing the Muslim supremacy formed itself in his mind. Religious spirit so natural to a woman when under misfortune was in Jijabai's case still further deepened by her husband's neglect and she imparted it to her son. The mutual isolation of their life drew them so close together that this mateless child learnt to love his mother, who was all in all to him in his early life, with a devotion bordering on a devotee's adoration for his deity. It should be borne in mind that it was at Shivaji's entreaties that Jijabai cancelled her project of going *sati* on Shahaji's death. Having been thrown on his own resources, Shivaji had to think for himself even in small matters and to carry out his own ideas without the guidance of any other person. Thus the two qualities of initiative and self-reliance, common to all great men were developed in Shivaji the Great from the early days of his youth from the mere fact of necessity. The first influence then in the formation of Shivaji's ideal of independence was that of his mother, who throughout his life was his only friend, philosopher, and guide and who inculcated at an early stage love of political freedom on his mind. The two chief elements in his character—the religious bent of his mind and the strong faith in his mission—Shivaji the Great undoubtedly owed to his mother. "If ever great men owed their greatness to the inspiration of their mothers, the influence of Jijabai was a factor of prime importance in the making of Shivaji's career and the chief source of his strength."[11] The vague stirrings of his youthful heart due to a mysterious call to stand forth as the champion of Hindu religion had their origin in the insecurity, intrigue and bloodshed of those times consequent on continuous internal as well as external predatory warfare, the insults and outrages to which the Hindus were often subjected by the dominant Muslim population and in the promptings of his ascetic mother's example and teachings. Several other factors tended to give definiteness to this nascent ideal and pointedness to his desire to achieve it at all risks and costs.

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[6] For the improvised reply that he gave when questioned in regard to this strange conduct, see Takakhav and Keluskar, pp. 59-60. On one occasion, it is said, he threw away the courtly dress on his return home and as if to wash away the pollution went through the penance of an expiatory bath.

[7] Rawlinson: *Shivaji the Maratha*, p. 29.

[8] *Ibid*.

[9] *Ibid*, p. 30.

[10] The marriage with Sayibai of the Nimbalkar family therefore took place in 1640 at Poona—See Takakhav and Keluskar, p. 56.

At Poona,[12] a seat of ancient Brahmanical learning, young Shivaji was surrounded by an atmosphere of rigid orthodoxy and it is mainly to the impressions that were then left on his plastic mind and to Dadoji's parting advice that we must trace subsequent policy, either of changing into Sanskrit the very names of his Ashtha Pradhans, or of proclaiming the protection of Brahmins and cows as the aim of his noble efforts. To these early impressions which he retained to the last, as well as to the teaching of the contemporary saints and prophets are due the extreme respect in which he held the religion of his ancestors and the veneration he showed to the Brahmins.

Here, too, he came to like the Puranic legends and the two great Hindu epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata by listening to recitations and story-tellings (Kirtans and Kathas). He would sit late in the night by the fire-side or under the moonlight, listening to these Kathas and Puranas and such was his passion for the recitations of the wonderous tales of the adventures of the Pandavas, of Rama and Sita or the ballads of the Gondhalis that it is on record how once long afterwards he even risked his life to be present at one of these Kathas.

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[11] Ranade: *Rise of the Maratha Power*, p. 63.
[12] See Rawlinson, p. 30.

In this way he assimilated the contents of these two valuable epic poems and got the necessary knowledge of the arts of government and war from them. Sircar says, "the noble examples of doing and suffering, of action and sacrifice, of military skill and state craft, which the stories of Rama and the Pandavas afford, the political lessons and moral maxims with which these epics are filled, deeply impressed his young mind."[13] His imagination was fired with the ambition to emulate the example of the legendary heroes. Shivaji the Great was further strengthened in his resolve to strike for the freedom of his country and to stake everything on its result by the inspiring natural scenery round about Poona and the Bohemian life he led at this time. Shivaji the Great used to wander over the hills and forests of the Sahyadri range in the company of his friends and the grandeur of the landscape with the big forts of Singhgad, Raigad and Torna for the background did not fail to make a powerful appeal to his imagination. Nature added one more impulse—to seek the freedom of his land. His active mind began to love independence and loathe a life of idle luxury in the pay of the Muslim ruler. Thus "an intense love of his country and his religion—which showed itself especially in his devotion for Amba Bhavani, the family Goddess—was the natural result. There seems to be little doubt that Shivaji grew up with a genuine sense of a mission that his career was inspired by a real desire to free his country from what he considered to be a foreign tyranny and not by a mere love of plunder."[14] Add to these, two other factors which influenced Shivaji's mind—one, his father's example and the other, the tendency to imitate the Muslim conquerors. His father's career, though unsuccessful, yet pointed him the possibilities as also the dangers of the situation. He had seen the mistake of his father and the other petty jahagirdars in trying to gain their independence on their own personal account and he at once grasped the essential fact that if he could secure unity in the Maratha ranks the same plan would fare better at his hands. Time and circumstances were also working in his favour. Singularly shrewd and intelligent for his age he was, it is said, wont to ask questions about state affairs. During his stay at the

[13] Sircar: *Shivaji and His Times*, p. 26.
[14] Rawlinson: *Shivaji the Maratha*, p. 30.

Bijapur court he got valuable experience and a "thorough insight into the strength and weakness of that great but degenerate capital."[15] He clearly saw that Mughals, having absorbed the Ahmednagar kingdom, would give Bijapur plenty to do. In the initial stages of his career this enmity between the two powers served the purpose of Shivaji the Great admirably.

The impulse of imitation is psychologically natural to man, woman or child, and this tendency to imitate the dominant type —and the Muslims as conquerors were the dominant type for the Hindus of that age—which is to be found in every subject nation must have also confirmed him in his great resolve to carve out an independent Hindu state under his own leadership. Human beings try to imitate the things by which they are surrounded. When we see how much Persian had already reacted on Marathi, how much the Muslim dress, coins, court manners, etc. were imitated by the Marathas of those generations, such a hypothesis does not seem to be wholly wrong. It is well known that in his dress and the habit of growing the beard Shivaji the Great followed the Muslims. He must have argued: if the Deccan nobles with the Hindu help could found dynasties by shaking off the control of the Delhi Sultans, why should not he be able to do the same against the Bijapur Government? Thus his ideal of "Hindavi Swarajya" was formed and the choice of this career which he was to follow was also made.

So far we have noticed the influences that were working on his mind when the ideal was gradually taking shape. Now let us see what his education was in other directions and what his preliminary preparations were to realise his ambition. Towards this end it is necessary to know something of Dadoji Kondadev under whose guidance and supervision Shivaji the Great received his early education. Dadoji, as the Kulkarni of Malthan, had gained considerable experience of administration and revenue matters. When Dadoji took over the charge of the Poona district he found it in a totally ruined condition. During the six years of warfare (1630-36), the land had been completely devastated now by Shahaji, now by the Bijapuris or again by the Mughals.[16] The work of the licentious soldiery had been finished by robber chiefs who like Moro Tandev tried to take

[15] *Ibid*, p. 29.

[16] For details refer to Sircar—*Shivaji and His Times*, pp. 23-24.

advantage of the prevailing anarchy. The province had been transferred of late from Nizamshahi to Adilshahi and the authority of the new state was yet to be established. "The Poona and Thana districts at the extreme north-western corner of the kingdom of Bijapur, therefore, formed a No Man's Land with none to administer and defend them."[17] Then came the terrible famine of 1631-32. Last but not the least was the growth of wild beasts which thinned the population, thus hampering cultivation.

On assuming charge, Dadoji carried out several wise revenue and other reforms. He used to get only a fraction of the paper revenue which was only Rs. 1,60,000 in modern coin. But he cleared the whole tract of the wolves by offering rewards to the hillmen; by granting lease under most favourable terms he induced the peasants to settle in the valleys and extend cultivation. Thus the whole country was brought under tillage. A body of local soldiers was also organised for the defence of the district. In the administration of Justice, Dadoji was very strict and the memory of his able and wise rule was long preserved by the people. After a century of local disturbances and foreign wars, the Poona Jahagir now enjoyed the benefits of peace and prosperity; cultivation improved, and the population increased. Thanks to the beneficent administration of Dadoji Kondadev the territory once more became a fair and smiling land.

Dadoji bestowed almost paternal care and affection on his young ward and gave him such education as enabled him to fulfil his great mission in after-life. Shivaji the Great became "a good archer and marksman, skilled in the use of the spear and of the various swords and daggers common in the Dekhan. His countrymen have always been celebrated for horsemanship; and in this accomplishment Shivaji excelled. By the care of his guardian he was fully instructed in all the ceremonies and observances enjoyed by the rule of his caste."[18] We also learn from Tarekh-i-Shivaji that "Dadoji trained Shivaji and appointed an excellent teacher for him. In a short time Shivaji became skilled in fighting, riding, and other accomplishments." In addition to riding, hunting, and military exercises, Shivaji

[17] Sircar: *Shivaji and His Times*, p. 23.

[18] G. Duff: *History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, p. 107.

learnt much that was useful in the art of Government, finance and revenue from Dadoji Kondadev who as Ranade says, "was a masterhand in the art of civil government."[19] As to whether Shivaji the Great knew how to read and write there is a good deal of difference of opinion. Grant Duff, Elphinstone and others hold that the Maratha chiefs were illiterate and that Shivaji could never write his name.[20] Mr. Sarkar writes, "The weight of evidence is in favour of the view that Shivaji was unlettered like three other heroes of medieval India—Akbar, Haider Ali and Ranjit Singh. The many Europeans who visited him never saw him write anything; when they presented any petition to him the Rajah always passed it on to his ministers to be read to him. No piece of writing in his own hand is known to exist."[21] On the other hand Maratha historians maintain that Shivaji knew reading and writing. Mr. Rajwade says that he made considerable progress in Urdu and Persian and had made a beginning in the elements of the Sanskrit language.[22] Mr. Sardesai says that "from the historical papers now made available there can be no doubt that Shivaji knew how to read and write."[23] Mr. Takakhav and Mr. Keluskar also do not believe in the illiteracy of Shivaji.[24] Among the Bakharkars, Sabhasad is silent on the subject of Shivaji's education; Chitnis merely says that Shivaji at the age of ten became "very learned" but that is vague; and Shivadigvijaya gives a long list of every known art and science as mastered by him in boyhood which is too extravagant to be believed. It is quite possible Shivaji the Great just knew the simple arts of reading and writing but did not do much useful book-learning. He had, of course, mastered the contents of the two epics by listening to recitations and story-telling and that was enough in that age when not much book-learning had to be done especially by the soldiers. Thus the deficiency regarding book-learning was made up in other ways, e.g. listening to recitations and story-telling etc. Mr. Sircar says, "The want of book-learning did not leave his mind a dull and sterile soil nor impair his efficiency as a man of action in a world that was mediaeval."[25]

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[19] Ranade: *Rise of the Maratha Power*, p. 64.

[20] See G. Duff: *History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, p. 107. Elphinstone: *History of India*, p. 603.

[21] *Shivaji and His Times*, p. 26.

[22] Further Mr. Rajwade in a learned article contributed to the Marathi Magazine "Saraswati Mandir" (Vol. 5, No. 5) has exploded Grant Duff's hypothesis of Shivaji's illiteracy.

[23] Sardesai, *History of Modern India*, Part II, Vol. I, pp. 163 and 165.

[24] *Life of Shivaji Maharaj*, p. 76.

The Mavals had been completely subjugated by Dadoji Kondadev. The deshpandes were mainly won over but those who dared to defy his authority were defeated and crushed.[26]

Peace and prosperity having been thus established in that region, it became a source of wealth and strength to Shivaji instead of being an unprofitable and a dangerous possession. It was from this region that Shivaji the Great drew his best soldiers, his earliest comrades and most devoted of his friends like Yesaji Kank, Baji Pasalkar and Tanaji Malusare. With these friends young Shivaji wandered over the hills and forests and deep valleys, of the Sahyadri mountain and thus trained himself to a life of hardihood. He was now and again absent in the Konkan for several days at a time. The mavles in his service accompanied him on his excursions and in hunting, and young Shivaji became extremely popular with them as also with his countrymen roundabout. In his visits to the different parts of the Ghat matha and the Konkan he familiarized himself with the paths and defiles of that wild country and gathered a first-hand knowledge of its people. This personal and intimate information of the country and its inhabitants was quite essential for the future conqueror as a preliminary preparation for his military career that was to follow in due course. The hill forts under all the Muslim Governments were, as Grant Duff remarks,[27] generally much neglected and Shivaji the Great happened to notice this important fact on the occasion of his excursions.

The time now arrived for the son of the Jahagirdar to choose his career and on this point Shivaji the Great came into conflict with his guardian. Dadoji Kondadeo was indeed an able, hardworking, and honest officer, a man of methodical habits leading a spotless life, but he was incapable of either taking long views or of possessing high ideals and bold ambitions. To such a humdrum man of the old school of thought, Shivaji's love of adventure and independence appeared to be nothing less than a sign of a wayward spirit well calculated to ruin the chances of his life. To win him, therefore, from what to Dadoji were wild schemes, Shivaji was confided with much of the affairs of the Jahagir. A large share of power being thus entrusted to him, he began to pay and receive visits from respectable Marathas in the neighbourhood of Poona and soon secured the universal good-will by his obliging and conciliatory manners. Dadoji did everything in his power to discourage his young ward in his ambitious projects. He argued long with Shivaji, advising him to rise like his ancestors to a position of wealth and power as an obedient vassal and captain of mercenaries under Bijapur. He even complained to Shahaji but his purpose was unshaken. Service either under the decadent Adil Shahas or under the Mughals, who had killed his grand uncle and who were the prime cause of the worries and cares of his heroic mother in his infancy, was unthinkable to Shivaji the Great. Besides, Delhi was to the Deccanis a far off city with an alien language and a stay there meant nothing short of an exile. It was absurd to think that he would be content to remain a subordinate jahagirdar of the Muslim powers, hating as he so intensely did, not the Muslim religion itself or even Muslims but the religious and other iniquities practised on his countrymen, nurtured as he was on the ancient Hindu traditions and responsive as his vigorous mind was to the prevailing environment of political, social, and religious change. A life of idle luxury and drunken profligacy was equally distasteful to this eminently virtuous child of Maharashtra. The only effect Dadoji's opposition had on his mind was to bring out clearly before him the dangers and risks of the path which he had already decided to follow and this made his resolve doubly sure. He decided to champion the cause of the fallen Hindu Dharma whatever the price he might have to pay. He knew that the undertaking, as Kincaid and Parasnis remark, a hopeless one. " After three centuries of slavery the wish for freedom was all but dead and lived, if at all, in a few hill tracts in the Maval and the Konkan. He could expect no aid from other Maratha nobles. All, that the Ghorpades, the Mores, the Manes, the Sawants and others aspired to, was their own advancement at court or the enlargement of their fiefs at the expense of their neighbours. Without resources he must raise an army. He must inspire it, with his own words and facts, with high ideals. He must fight against his own relatives and countrymen. He must incur charges of treason and charges of unfilial conduct. In the end he would most likely see his hopes shattered, his friends butchered, and himself condemned to a cruel and lingering death."[28] And yet he chose "the straight and narrow path" for the sense of his mission had fully developed in his young but thoughtful mind. Such is always the stuff of which heroes are made. "More than 2,500 years before, three immortal goddesses had called on another eastern prince to decide questions very similar to those which now confronted Shivaji. But far other than that of Paris was the judgment of Shahaji's son. He turned aside from the rich promises of Hera and the voluptuous smiles of Approdite and without a single backward glance placed the golden fruit in the hands of Pallas Athene."[29]

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[25] *Shivaji and His Times*, p. 27.

[26] Rajwade records the story of one of his reverses in which Krishnaji Nayak Bandal, the deshmukh of Hirdas maval defeated Dadoji and forced him to retreat to Shivapur—See Khand, XV, pp. 316 & 393. Chitnis Bakhar however says (p. 33) that Shivaji put Bandal to death when he refused to wait on Shivaji.

[27] *History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, p. 109.

Worn out by his age and worry on his young ward's account Dadoji Kondadeo died early in 1647. "Just before his death," says Grant Duff, "he sent for his Shivaji when so far from dissuading him in his accustomed manner, he advised him to prosecute his plans of independence; to protect Brahmins, Kine, and cultivators; to preserve the temples of the Hindus from violation; and to follow the fortune which lay before him. The dying injunctions of Dadoji Kondadev served to confirm Shivaji in his designs and gave them a sanction in the eyes of the subordinate officers of the Jahagir, which must have tended materially to raise his character and perhaps in some degree to elevate his motives of action."[30] Dadoji's death left Shivaji the Great free to develop his plans according to his own ideas.

Having seen how his ideal was formed, what his education was and what preliminary preparations he made, let us now briefly notice his career.

Shivaji the Great was now ready for his task. As Sircar remarks, "He had already been trained in martial exercises and civil administration; he had familiarised himself with the troops of his father's western Jahagir and the people he would have to govern. Initiative and power of command had been freely developed in him without check or interference from his guardian. Administrative orders had, for some time before this, been issued in his name as his father's representative, while Dadoji Kondadev had stood by watching his pupil. Shivaji had also taken part with his mother or his tutor in some judicial investigation and public discussion of legal disputes (mahzar)." [31]

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[28] Kincaid and Parasnis: *History of the Maratha People,* p. 21.

[29] *Ibid,* p. 21.

[30] Grant Duff: *History of the Marathas,* Vol. I, p. 112. Ranade merely states "the old man yielded and blessed Shivaji before he died."—*Rise of the Maratha Power,* p. 66.

The officers that had gathered already round him were men of tried merit and devotion to him. Thus his civil and military arrangements were complete before he began to put his ideal to practice.

Shivaji the Great began his military career very cautiously and all his earliest attempts were directed towards securing the neighbouring territory without either exciting the suspicions of the Bijapur court or attracting their notice in these initial stages. From the beginning he had a very clear idea as to how he was to proceed about his plan. The chief means he employed were either bribery, compact, diplomacy or surprise attacks. He knew he could not long fool the Bijapur king but wanted to strengthen his position as much as possible before he ventured upon bigger enterprises.

Taking advantage of the serious illness of the king of Bijapur and the consequent disorder in his kingdom, Shivaji the Great struck his first blow in 1646 by occupying the fort of Torna [32] by tricking its Bijapur commander and immediately set to work to repair its defences. Khafi Khan gives an admirable account of his rise to power and of the situation that contributed to it :—

"Shivaji became the manager of these two parganas (Poona and Supe) on the part of his father and looked carefully after them. He was distinguished in his tribe for courage and intelligence; and for craft and trickery he was reckoned a sharp son of the devil, the father of fraud. In that country where all the hills rise to the sky and the jungles are full of trees and bushes he had an inaccessible abode. Like the zamindars of the country he set about erecting castles on the hills and mud forts which in the Hindawi dialect of the Dakhin are called garhi. Before the jahagirdars in those troublous times could appeal to Bijapur he had sent his own account of the matter with presents . . . and offering to pay some advanced amount for the lands on their being attached to his own jahagir or to pay their revenues direct to the government. He communicated these matters to the officials at Bijapur who in those disturbed times took little heed of what any one did. The country of the Dakhin was never free from commotions and outbreaks and so the officials, the rayats, and the soldiery, under the influence of surrounding circumstances, were greedy, stupid, and frivolous. In accordance with the wishes of this disturber, the reins of authority over that country fell into his hands and he at length became the most notorious of all the rebels. He assembled a large force of Maratha robbers and plunderers and set about reducing fortresses."[33]

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[31] Refer to Rajwade: *Materials for the History of the Marathas*, Vols. 11-17-18-20-22.

[32] Rajwade: *Materials for the History of the Marathas*, pp. 267-269.

With the large treasure he discovered in the course of the repairs to the walls of Torna he proceeded unceremoniously to build another stronghold on the neighbouring peak of Rajgad. This bold move stirred even the languid authorities at Bijapur and Shahaji was ordered to check his son's aggressions. Shahaji wrote to Dadoji Kondadev to keep a tighter control on his ward but the old minister, now on the point of death, secretly sympathised with the designs of Shivaji the Great. On Dadoji's death Shivaji took over the Poona estate as his own from his father, captured his only rival Baji Mohite, his father's brother-in-law, for defiance of his authority and promptly packed him off as a troublesome fellow to the Karnatik to join Shahaji. About this time he won over the fortress of Sinhagad by bribery and surprised Purandhar by a trick. Thus by the end of 1649 he established his full control over the Poona district and waited for an opportunity, "watching and crouching like the wily tiger of his own mountain valleys until he had stolen into a situation from which he could at once spring on his prey."[34]

All these acquisitions were made without shedding blood and as government districts were not molested no attention was paid to the irregularities in the Poona Jahagir.

[33] Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, pp. 256-57.
[34] Grant Duff: *History of the Marathas*, p. 114.

In pursuance of his well-thought-out plan of developing his own resources, Shivaji the Great now began to cast his longing eyes on Konkan, the fertile low country lying between the ghats and the sea. The first blow fell on Mulana Ahmed of Kalyan. Coming to know from his spies that a load of treasure was about to be sent from Kalyan to Bijapur he ambushed the convoy as it climbed the hills and captured the treasure with very little loss of life on his side. This was the first occasion on which blood was spilt. He liberally rewarded the gallantry of his soldiers and made ample provision for the families of those who had fallen. The complete success of this enterprise and the generosity accompanying it gave a sense of their importance to the mavlis and they dreaded the Muslims no longer. Soon after this Abaji Sondev attacked Kalyan itself and took the governor and his family prisoners. Towards his captives he behaved like a true soldier and allowed Mulana Ahmed to go free. His chivalrous conduct to the Mulana's beautiful daughter-in-law increased his prestige. The people were tired of the Muslim mismanagement and the capture of Kalyan was followed by a general uprising. This daring exploit marks the beginning of his career as the champion of Hindu religion in the Dekhan. Fort after fort either voluntarily surrendered or was surprised, till the Konkan as far as Sawantwadi was in the hands of the Marathas. The hill of Raigad, his future capital, was probably first occupied at this time. Kalyan and the revenues of the Konkan were thus lost to the Bijapur court and the disgraced Mulana Ahmed clamoured for revenge. But the decaying state was afraid to act openly against Shahaji who had won big successes in the late Karnatic campaign. They, therefore, instructed Baji Ghorpade to seize Shahaji by treachery. For this cowardly betrayal, Shivaji the Great subsequently took a fearful vengeance on Mudhol which he razed to the ground in 1661. This was the only instance where the enraged Shivaji ordered anything like a general massacre.[35]

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[35] Mr. Sarkar following the Persian historians does not believe in the theory that Shahaji was arrested for his son's aggressions. He represents Shahaji as being imprisoned for displaying a spirit of insubordination to the commander-in-chief Mustappa—See *Shivaji and His Times*, pp. 37-39. This version is also followed by Modak in his Marathi History of the Adil Shahi Dynasty—see Chapter II, p. 47. Grant Duff (*History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, pp. 119-126), Kincaid (*History of the Maratha People*, p. 28), Wilke (*History of Mysore*, Vol. I, p. 75), Sardesai (*Marathi Riyasat*—Purvardha,

When Shahaji was released in 1653, Shivaji the Great was relieved from anxiety on that score, and was therefore free once more to pursue his ideal further. This time it was Javli and its Raja Chandrarao More who claimed his attention. The state of Javli[36] included a large slip of the Ghat Matha, the borderland between the Dekhan and the Konkan and if Shivaji the Great was to be able to pass between these two tracts in safety he must take possession of Javli or form an alliance with its ruler. The state was, therefore, of great strategic importance. But the obdurate Chandrarao More refused to enter into any alliance. It was also impossible to attack him openly with any reasonable hope of success owing to his strong position in men, money, and hill forts. To these general considerations was added another of a personal nature—Chandrarao More must have been privy to the treacherous attack[37] made upon Shivaji the Great by Baji Shamraj. Incensed at this[38] the Maratha leader decided to get rid of More by fair means or foul. The permission granted to Baji Shamraj's party to pass through Javli and the aid that was possibly given to him provided Shivaji with a good excuse. The actual details of the plot were managed by his two officers Ragho Ballal and Sambhaji Kawji. Chandrarao and his brother were accordingly stabbed at a private interview and the mavlis emerged from their ambush and stormed the town. The Raja's troops, which were caught unprepared, were quickly scattered in spite of their brave

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pp. 207-208, and other historians accept the theory as they rely on the traditional account given by Chitnis Bakhar and other Marathi Bakhars. Jedhe Shakavali simply says that Shahaji was arrested near Jinji by Mustapha Khan which would mean that Ghorpade acted as his agent. Mr. C. V. Vaidya also partially follows the theory of Shahaji's insubordination—See *Shivaji, the Founder of the Maratha Swarajya*, p. 59.

[36] For a description of Javli refer to Bombay Gazetteer XIX, p. 3. Chandra Rao More was the hereditory title of the fief holders of Javli. The feudal lord of Javli at the time was Krishnaji Baji. See Parasnis: *Itihas Sangraha* (misc. articles), p. 26.

[37] Ranade: *Rise of the Maratha Power*, pp. 86 & 93. Grant Duff: *History of Marathas*, Vol. I, p. 122. Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat* (Purvardha), p. 235.

[38] To the above motive the Parasnis mss. adds another, viz. that Jijabai asked for one of the three beautiful daughters of Balaji More as a bride for Shivaji and that the request was not granted on the ground of the inferiority of the Bhonsle family. See also "Mahabaleshwar" by Parasnis, p. 19. Mr. C. V. Vaidya, however, says that there was no daughter to be married at Javli and hence dismisses the whole story of the Bakhars as a myth and blasphemy—See *Shivaji the Founder of the Maratha Swarjya*, p. 67.

persistence.[39] The various hill forts of the Ghat matha were then immediately stormed and the whole of the territory of the Mores fell into the hands of Shivaji. The terror of his name had now spread all over the central Deccan and practically every independent chief including the Savants of Vadi was brought under his sway, the only exception being the Siddis of the important port of Janjira. Thus the authority of Bijapur, north of Kolhapur was almost extinguished.

Shivaji the Great was, in this way, fast approaching the first crisis of his career. The reason why the Bijapur authorities had so helplessly looked on, while Shivaji's power was ever on the increase, was to be found in the internal quarrels that broke out at the capital between the different factions after Mahomed Adil Shah's death in 1656 and the Mughal policy of aggression which was being pursued at this time against both Bijapur and Golkonda, under Prince Aurangzeb now viceroy of the Deccan for the second time. Soon after came the news that Shah Jehan was seriously ill and Aurangzeb had to withdraw the imperial army and march to Delhi to fight Dara.

When Aurangzeb invaded Bijapur, Shivaji the Great with his usual astuteness offered to acknowledge him overlord of the Deccan and asked to be confirmed in his possessions which, he represented, he had seized on account of their mismanagement by the Bijapur state. Each equally wanted to take advantage of the other against their common enemy, Bijapur. As soon, however, as the Mughal army was withdrawn, Shivaji the Great suddenly raided Junnar and Ahmednagar and captured a big treasure. He carried away a thousand good cavalry mounts which were at once utilised in raising his cavalry under the control of Netaji Palkar. On the return of Aurangzeb he again sent an embassy asking for pardon for the past raids and suggesting that he would hold Konkan in fief to Delhi. Aurangzeb again temporised, sending a gracious answer.

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[39] For details of this incident refer to:
Grant Duff: *History of the Marathas*, pp. 124-125.
Sirkar: *Shivaji and His Times*, pp. 44-45.
Rawlinson: *Shivaji the Maratha*, p. 43.
Takakhav and Keluskar, pp. 137-143.
Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat* (Purvardha), pp. 235-240.
Kincaid and Parasnis: *History of the Maratha People*, pp. 29-33.
C. V. Vaidya: *Shivaji, the Founder of Maratha Swarajya*, pp. 65-69.
But he gives a different version saying that the Mores were killed in the fight and not by Shivaji's two agents on the pretext of a marriage alliance.
Also see S. V. Raddi: *Shivaji*, pp. 101-102.

In the meanwhile having recovered from Aurangzeb's recent attack, the Bijapur Government resolved by one supreme effort to settle their account with Shivaji the Great who had defied them for so many years. During the monsoon of 1659 preparations were pushed forward at Bijapur with feverish activity and a formidable army fully equipped was launched against the rebel under Afzal Khan, an experienced soldier and a man known for personal strength and courage. On his part, the Great Captain too was not idle. Moro Trimbak Pingle, a young Brahmin officer, had been ordered to fortify the famous Par Pass of Javli and thus secure it at any cost and Moro Pingle did his work well, finishing the same in 1656. The details [40] of the defeat and death of this general, however interesting, cannot be noticed here. Suffice it to say that the crisis called forth all the resourcefulness, all the daring and courage, all the skill and mastery of details, all the cunning and foresight of the heroic soul, Shivaji the indomitable, in making his plans to face this terrible menace. In war, annihilation of the enemy forces is the objective, not the winning and keeping of provinces.[41] So well did this "born strategist" understand this principle and so thoroughly did he draw his net that the entire magnificent army was before long levelled to the dust. "That day the Dekhan vultures gorged their fill. Seldom has a large force been so completely and dramatically destroyed with so little loss to the attacking party. In the Maratha camp, songs, feasting, and rejoicing resounded all night. Silver and golden necklaces, robes of honour, and presents of money were given to those who had distinguished themselves in the fight or had received wounds and to the relatives of the fallen. The spoil was immense." [42] This rout of the Bijapur army and the capitulation of Wai with Kamalgad and other forts under its charge completed the breakdown of the power of Bijapur in the central Dekhan and increased correspondingly the prestige of the Great Shivaji.

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[40] For the important details of this episode refer to Sarkar: *Shivaji and His Times,* pp. 63-75; Kincaid and Parasnis, pp. 37-41; Takakhav, pp. 151-175; Grant Duff, pp. 141-147; Rawlinson, pp. 47-55; Raddi, pp. 115-120; Vaidya, pp. 88-104; Ranade, pp. 95-99; Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat* (Purwardha), pp. 241-255. For a picturesque account of the scene see Dr. J. Fryer's *A New Account of East Indies and Persia,* p. 172.

[41] *Deductions from the World War,* p. 91.

[42] Rawlinson: *Shivaji the Maratha,* pp. 55-56.

After the defeat of Afzal Khan's army, Shivaji the Great decided to take the offensive and teach his enemies a lesson that would not be easily forgotten. He possessed now a well-organised army which was more than a match for any force that may be sent against it. If he remained inactive, that would surely invite perhaps a stronger expedition against him. On the other hand the advantage of a treaty could be secured without any difficulty by marching straight upon Bijapur while yet the city was panic-stricken. He could at least get himself confirmed in his late conquests. He, therefore, laid his plans with great speed and secrecy and made up his mind to carry the war into the enemy's country. Even Fredrick the Great could not have done better.

He made his dispositions with a strategical skill worthy of a great military leader. He kept one army to guard the Poona district, he detached another to counter any flanking movement from the Sawants of Sawantwadi or the Siddi of Janjira both of whom had, on the approach of Afzal Khan, renounced their allegiance to him; he himself marched southwards at the head of a third. On reaching the Kolhapur district, he seized the great fortress of Panhala, the key to the southern Maratha country. Vishalgad, Rangana, and Pavangad were then taken. A tardy attempt of Rustum Zaman to oppose the advance of the Marathas was beaten back and his small cavalry force was driven in headlong confusion across the Krishna. The Marathas followed up their initial success by advancing upto the gates of Bijapur, plundering as they went and rapidly retreating with their booty. When the Bijapur government recovered from the effects of the first shock of the sudden Maratha raid, they sent a large army under a famous Abyssinian general, Siddi Joher. Unable to face such a force in the open field, Shivaji the Great left Netaji Palkar with his cavalry division to harass the enemy in the open country and himself fell back on Panhala. But this proved to be a strategical error. Netaji Palkar, even though successful in the beginning, was driven back by the exasperated Bijapuris. During the whole rainy season of 1660 he was shut up in the fort and was forced to make his choice between surrendering the fort and tricking the enemy once again. He decided to try the second course. Negotiations were opened with the Siddi at which he pretended to give up the fort the next day[43] and consequently when the vigilance was relaxed, that same night he slipped with a few followers under cover of rain and darkness through their outposts. The bird had flown. Furious at being thus deceived, the Bijapur cavalry under Fazal Mahomed Khan (Afzal Khan's son) was sent in hot pursuit. The Marathas were caught up some six miles from Vishalgad[44] where they would be safe, once they got within its walls. It was on this occasion when the devoted Baji Prabhu, the Marshal Ney of Shivaji the Great, was fighting a rear-guard action to stop the enemy from pursuing the main body under the Great King himself that a second Thermopylae was enacted. Three bloody assaults were delivered on the rearguard but all of them were beaten off; the heroic Baji Prabhu with 700 of his gallant followers fell but not before his master reached Vishalgad[44] in safety.

The ineffective campaign continued for some time more. Then a fresh combination was formed against him by Bijapur, Sawantwadi and Mudhol. His first blow was delivered against Mudhol for past wrongs. He had not forgotten what his father wrote to him thirteen years before, "If you be a true son of mine punish Baji Ghorpade." Creeping like a tiger for its prey he rushed Mudhol at dawn and neither man, woman, nor child was spared. He fired the town after him and with lightning speed retreated to Vishalgad. Internecine feuds paralysed the action of the Bijapur court. Suspected by the King, Siddi Joher was driven to rebellion. Thus in the hour of need Bijapur lost the services of a good general. Sawantwadi was conquered by Shivaji and trouble began to brew again in Karnatic. Shivaji the Great at this time brought the Portuguese to their knees and forced an alliance on them. With his unfailing intuition he realised the importance of a navy and formed the nucleus of a fleet with which he plundered the trading vessels bound for Janjira and other ports of Bijapur. These events induced the Bijapur court to come to terms with him. Shivaji the Great was acknowledged as the ruler of the Dekhan as far south as Kolhapur and of the Konkan as far as Goa—a territory some hundred and fifty miles in length and from fifty to a hundred miles in breadth. Recognising the importance of his Konkan kingdom the king decided about this time to make Raigad his capital. Rajgad was not so suitable. Hereafter his troops deposited at this more convenient place their booty after their raids on Surat, Ahmednagar, and other towns.[45] The capital took several years to build but the main defences were completed by 1664.[46]

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[43] Modak's Marathi history of the Adil Shahi Kingdom gives a different version of this interview. See p. 202.

[44] Grant Duff, Rawlinson and Ranade say that Shivaji escaped to Rangna but it is now generally agreed that the fort to which Shivaji fled was not Rangna but Vishalgad.

During the cold season of 1662 the great cavalry leader Netaji Palkar pillaged the Mughal territory upto the very walls of Aurangabad spreading terror all round and taking vast quantities of plunder. It was clear that the troops on the spot could not cope with the Marathas and the Emperor furious at this open defiance of his authority sent his uncle Shayista Khan with an immense army[47] to teach Shivaji the Great a lesson. Aurangzeb did not have a proper appreciation of the situation. Evidently he had not reckoned with the masterful personality of the Hero of the Dekhan or his doughty companions and the patriotic spirit that animated them. Early in 1663 the whole force moved in the direction of Poona without any premonition of the coming misfortunes. The Marathas followed their guerilla tactics,[48] hanging on its flanks, plundering the baggage and cutting off stragglers. They also destroyed the grain and fodder in the country round Poona and Chakan, thus removing all traces of human habitation. Harassed and weary the Imperial army reached Poona and occupied it. It was their intention to rest here for the rainy season and then begin the campaign in right earnest. But the ardour of the Imperialists was damped at the very outset by the determined resistance that was offered by the brave little garrison of the small fort of Chakan. For nearly three months the besiegers were unable to take the fort in spite of their superior strength and even when for want of reinforcements the town surrendered at discretion, it was not until nearly 1,000 of the Mughals were killed. The brave killedar, Firangoji Narsala, who had excited the sincere admiration of Shahista Khan by his dogged resistance was pressed to enter the Imperial service on high pay. But Firangoji remained true to the cause of his master and was allowed to go back to Shivaji with his army.[49] This gave the chagrined Shahista Khan some idea as to what the reduction of the other Maratha strongholds meant to him. But worse was to follow. A mighty blow was delivered at the Mughals—"a blow whose cleverness of design, neatness of execution and completeness of success", Sarkar says, "created in the Mughal court and camp as much terror of his prowess and belief in his possession of magical powers as his coup against Afzal Khan had done among the Bijapuris."[50] In spite of the great precaution taken by him, Shivaji the Great, that wily Maratha, found means to evade his regulations and a surprise night attack on Lal Mahal (Shahista Khan's Poona residence for the time being) was planned from his retreat at Sinhagad and was executed with great daring. The panic-stricken general escaped only by leaping out of a window but not before a Maratha slashed at his hand on the window sill and cut off three of his fingers.[51] Wild was the joy of the Marathas when their beloved king returned safe to his stronghold. At dawn a party of Muslim cavalry which, in hopes of intercepting the attackers, ventured too near Raigad, was routed with great loss by means of the fire of a concealed battery. This was even worse. Shivaji's prestige, as an incarnation of Satan against whose entrance no place was considered to be proof, rose very high. The whole country talked of the superhuman feat with astonishment and terror, while at the Imperial court there was bitter humiliation and sorrow at the disaster to the "premier peer" of the Empire and maternal uncle of the Emperor. The dispirited Shahista Khan was recalled and as a mark of Aurangzeb's displeasure was transferred to the penal province of Bengal without being allowed even to see the Emperor on his way to his new charge. Prince Muazzam was sent to relieve him and the Khan left Deccan for good in the middle of January 1664. Raja Jaswant Singh remained as the Prince's deputy, though he was suspected of corruption and treason. Shivaji the Great, however, continued as successful as ever. "He assaulted the foe on dark nights, seized difficult passes and fired jungles full of trees." He struck coins in defiance of the Mughal supremacy. His navy seized parts on the coast of Gujarat and to the horror of the devout Emperor cut off pilgrim ships bound for Mecca and held rich pilgrims up to ransom. Ahmednagar was plundered and even Surat was raided early in 1664. As one of English factors wrote, "He seemed to be everywhere and prepared for every emergency. The sack of Surat was a feat of even greater audacity than that Shivaji the Great had ever displayed before. Only nine days before Shivaji was in the neighbourhood of Bassein but making a forced march by a roundabout route, he travelled with such rapidity and secrecy that he arrived at Surat at eleven o'clock in the morning of Wednesday, the 6th of January 1664, and pitched his tent in a garden just outside the eastern gate. The night before, the Raja had sent messengers with a letter directing the governor and three of the most prominent merchants to come to him personally and settle the terms or the whole town would be pillaged and burnt. As no answer was given to his demand, the Maratha horsemen immediately on their arrival entered the deserted city and made good their threat. Thousands of houses were burnt and two-thirds of the town was destroyed. The looting was carried on for four full days and nights and yielded about a crore of rupees. The Marathas "scorned to carry away anything but gold, silver, pearls, diamonds and such precious ware." On reaching Surat Shivaji the Great had publicly announced that he had not come to do any personal injury to the English or other merchants but to take revenge on Aurangzeb for having invaded his country. But money was his real object and not cruelty to the citizens and this secured to his heart's content he retreated by rapid marches to Konkan.[52] Thus did the master strategist make Aurangzeb pay dearly for Shahista Khan's seizure of Poona. Shivaji the Great then sailed down the Konkan and ravaged the coast towns, exacting from the English factory at Karwar an indemnity of one hundred and twelve pounds.

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[45] His treasury consisted of over nine crores of rupees including coins of all nations and vast stores of gold, pearls, diamonds and jewels of all kinds, silk and cloths, a vast armoury and profuse stores for a siege. Refer to Scott-Waring: "*History of the Marathas*", p. 215.

[46] For a description of the fort and the manner in which even the most obscure path was discovered and closed, refer to Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 288, and Fryer: "*A new Account etc.*", Vol. I, pp. 198-210. *Bombay Gazetteer*, XI, 357.

[47] Mankar's "*Life and Exploits of Shivaji*" gives the strength of the army as 10,000 cavalry, a regiment of Rohilla Pathans and archers, elephants, artillery and baggage.

[48] *Vide* Khafi Khan, Elliot, Vol. VII, p. 261.

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[49] See Sarkar: *Shivaji and His Times,* p. 90.

[50] *Shivaji and His Times,* p. 92.

[51] For details of this night attack, etc., see Rawlinson, pp. 68-70; Sarkar, p. 93; Takakhav, pp. 229-234; Kincaid & Parasnis, pp. 62-64; Grant Duff, pp. 164-166; Vaidya, pp. 134-142. Sardesai, *Marathi Riyasat* (Purvardha), pp. 288-91.

But gradually the Mughals now led by Diller Khan and Jaisingh, two of their ablest captains, began to prevail. The veteran Jaisingh did not enter upon his task with a light heart but made his preparations with such a thoroughness and far-sightedness that not even the minutest detail was neglected. He opened the campaign with vigour and the siege of Purandar was pressed on with determination. Purandar was now doomed, invested as it was by a force which was at least ten times of the garrison and which was led by Diller Khan with a dogged resolution. During the incessant fighting which lasted for two months the Maratha ranks were thinned considerably. Early in the siege they also lost their gallant captain Murar Baji Prabhu, who attempted to reach Diller Khan by climbing the hill, by making a sortie with 700 selected men. In the severe hand-to-hand fight the Mavlis slew more than 700 Pathans and Murar Baji indeed succeeded in facing Diller. The Khan moved by his matchless courage called upon him to desist and promised him his fief and a high post under him. But Murar indignantly spurned the offer and was on the point of striking at Diller when the latter shot him down with an arrow. Thus died another of Shivaji's trusted lieutenants, who never thought any sacrifice too great for the cause of independence. Three hundred Mavlis fell with their worthy captain and the rest retreated to the fort, undismayed by their leader's fall and saying, "What though one man Murar Baji is dead? We are as brave as he and we shall fight with the same courage!" The miserable remnant of the garrison continued the unequal contest but at last the advantage of sheer numbers began to tell and Shivaji the Great found himself forced to rely upon diplomacy rather than upon the doubtful chances of a protracted war in which he stood to gain nothing and to lose everything. Even on this occasion the foresight of the king was remarkable. He saw that it was necessary for him to lie low for the time being and trust to future events for the fulfilment of his cherished ambition. Out of his 32 forts in the Dekhan twenty[53] were to be surrendered and he was to assume the position of a munsabdar of the Mughal Emperor. On these terms truce was made. The campaign against the Mughals was thus a failure; the Great Shivaji had yet to go through another ordeal in which his very life was at stake,—his imprisonment at Agra. Aurangzeb then sent Jaisingh on an expedition against Bijapur in which campaign Shivaji the Great rendered valuable service to the Emperor's cause. At the end of the campaign Raja Jaisingh with great difficulty pursuaded Shivaji the Great to go to Delhi for a personal interview with the Emperor. Shivaji, in spite of the many advantages pointed out to him, hesitated long but the majority of his ministers favoured the journey and Jaisingh also gave the necessary guarantee of his personal safety. The motive, however, of this visit and his submission to Jaisingh is obscure. It is certain, as Ranade remarks, that "there must have been some deep-laid scheme of policy which justified to him and his councillors the course he pursued. Shivaji might well have thought that his temporary submission and visit to Delhi would introduce him to a larger sphere of action or at least would enable him to make the acquaintance of the great Rajput nobles of the Empire. Jaisingh's friendship cemented by such an act of self-sacrifice might prove helpful in the furtherance of his larger designs. Shivaji had been always urging his claims to Chowth and Sardeshmukhi and though these claims had not been recognised either by Aurangzeb or Shah Jehan, hopes had been held out which encouraged him to think that by temporary submission he might secure a legitimate basis for the assertion of these claims." Considerations like these and a wise desire to achieve his object by diplomacy rather than risk the ruin of his nascent kingdom in a prolonged war which was being carried on by two determined captains of great repute, backed too by the entire resources of the Mughal Empire, must have weighed with the shrewd Raja on this occasion. The decision was deliberately made and surely there was nothing in the military situation to warrant a belief that Jaisingh's extensive military preparations alone induced Shivaji, as hinted by Sircar with his usual partiality to the Mughals, to make his peace with the Emperor at any price. Peaceful means, if only as a change, and as a variant to his customary tactics of cunning and stratagem, must have had their charm for Shivaji the Great, who like the king, Fredrick the Great, was equally at home with the arts of peace as those of war. If possible he wanted to secure the viceroyalty of the Deccan as a preliminary to the complete subversion of the remaining Deccan sultanates for it had manifest advantages. Such a course would have placed the vast resources of the Empire at his disposal and would have added immensely to his strength. He would not have to fight on two fronts with two different enemies who, if united, would make short work of his national attempt. On the contrary as the viceroy of the Deccan he could strengthen his position and at a favourable opportunity throw off the mask and in conjunction with the Rajput friends declare his independence. In the alternative he would study the situation at the Emperor's court and at least get a full and useful knowledge of the affairs of his rival and opponent. Perhaps in the face of the solemn promise about his personal safety vouchsafed by Jaisingh he did not give due consideration to the grave risk that was involved in venturing in the lion's own den. Aurangzeb received him coldly at the Durbàr at Agra[54] and to his utter disgust found himself assigned to the rank of a Panchhazari. Stung by fury at what he considered a bitter humiliation, Shivaji expressed his protest so loudly that Aurangzeb hearing his excited words dismissed him from the Durbar and forbade him to attend the Imperial levee until further orders. Guards were stationed at his place of residence and the truth now dawned on Shivaji that he was practically a prisoner of the treacherous Emperor with his life at the mercy of his sworn enemy. The second crisis in his career had been reached. Shivaji the Great was weighed but was not found wanting. Diplomacy for diplomacy, cunning for cunning, the Deccan fox was any day superior to his Delhi rival. Shivaji the Great extricated himself from the dangerous

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[52] For details of this important raid see Sarkar: *Shivaji and His Times*, pp. 97-108.

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[53] There is no agreement as to the number of forts surrendered. Prof. Sarkar says the forts were 23 in number. But Rajwade quotes an imperial prescript to Shivaji in which the forts are stated to be 20. See Vol. VIII, p. 14. Ranade also says twenty forts were made over to the Mughals, see p. 106.

[54] Rajwade: *Marathyanchya Itihasanchi Sadhane*, Vol. VIII, p. 23.

situation by a masterly stroke which for its deep insight into human character and knowledge of human weakness has scarcely been equalled. Where did the great king learn his principles of Psychology? we wonder. He and his son Sambhaji escaped in sweetmeat baskets one day and rode for their lives to Mathura.[55] Here he was met by the faithful Tanaji and after hair-breadth escapes and following a circuitous route to evade his pursuers, he returned to Raigad in the guise of a Bairagi to the great relief of his anxious mother and his devoted subjects.

The news of the king's romantic escape and safe return spread like wild fire all over the country and great indeed were the rejoicings of the Marathas on that day. In his absence all had not gone well. The Mughal garrisons occupied Sinhagad and Purandar and thus by their commanding position held the districts of Poona, Supa and Chakan, the three districts which he now possessed in the Dekhan, under subjection. In the Konkan the Marathas had Raigad and Kalyan districts together with such of the ceded forts which the able Moro Pingle had managed to reoccupy after he was appointed regent during the king's absence. From 1667 to 1669 Shivaji the Great was occupied with civil and political reforms except the annual raid on Janjira which was everytime unsuccessful. In 1670 he was ready to take the field again having consolidated whatever of his former kingdom was now left to him. He opened the offensive with great vigour and immediate success. Judging rightly that Aurangzeb would not send any reinforcements to Prince Muazam or Jaisingh owing to jealousy of the one and suspicions of the other, he first of all took in hand the work of recapturing the hill-forts. Sinhagad, commanding as it did the Poona district and also because Queen Jijabai considered it a disgrace to allow the Muslims to be in possession of it[56] was the first to be retaken. This rather dangerous undertaking could be seen through only with the devotion and self-sacrifice of

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[55] For details of his audience with Aurangzeb and his escape and other incidents, see Rawlinson, pp. 73-74; Sarkar, pp. 156-174. Takakhav, pp. 274-294; Kincaid and Parasnis, pp. 72-78. Also Grant Duff, pp. 180-182, Sardesai, pp. 321-330.

[56] See Ballad of Sinhagad—Rawlinson—*Shivaji the Maratha*, Appendix I. Acworth's *Ballads of the Marathas*, p. 16, for the account of the part Jijabai played in urging Shivaji the Great to this measure.

Tanaji Malusare and his brother Suryaji. Tanaji the brave left with 1,000 picked men and as Shivaji afterwards lamented, the fort was captured but the lion was lost. When three hundred men succeeded in escalding the walls at an obscure spot, Tanaji sounded the advance but in the mortal combat that followed both Tanaji and Udai Bhanu, the redoubtable Rajput commander of the fort, fell. The leaderless Marathas were on the point of falling back on their ladders but Suryaji taunted them as cowards and cut off the ropes. Stung to the quick by the taunt the Marathas rallied and raising their battle cry of "Har, Har, Mahadeo", charged furiously and at last the fort was won. The garrison consisting of 1,000 Muslims and Rajputs was either killed in the action or taken prisoner. "Tanaji Malusare had died, as every right-minded man would wish to die, with his face to the foe, in one of the most gallant and desperate feats of arms of an age abounding in desperate deeds. Not a great leader like Moro Pingale or Netaji Palkar he was an honest and devoted soldier,"[57] such is the verdict of Mr. Rawlinson. One of the Great Shivaji's earliest friends, Tanaji had been with his revered comrade-in-arms and leader through thick and thin. When Shivaji heard of his loss, he was grieved deeply as if his right hand was cut off. One by one, the other forts held by the Mughals were soon afterwards recaptured, though in many cases the garrisons offered desperate resistance. Considering that Prince Muazam did not receive the much needed reinforcements from Delhi and having regard to the internal quarrels among the Imperialists, it is no wonder that the Marathas succeeded so completely in so short a time.

In 1670 Shivaji the Great raided Surat a second time at the head of 15,000 men. For three days the luckless city was pillaged at ease and the Marathas carried a rich harvest of booty safely to Raigad. An attempt on the part of the Muslim cavalry to intercept the returning convoy in the pass near Nasik was a miserable failure, the Muslims being driven back by a detachment of the king with great slaughter. In 1672 Moro Pingle fought one brilliant cavalry action at Salheri and literally cut the Mughal division under Ikhlas Khan to pieces. "This was the first complete victory of a Maratha force over an equal number of Mughals in the open field and it greatly enhanced their prestige."[58] Behold! the despised Bargirs of yesterday now became not only the equals of the best Mughal troops, but their superiors. The Marathas became a terror to their enemies. They swooped down upon Khandesh and demanded chowth from that Mughal city; they raided Ahmednagar, Aurangabad, and even Golkonda, and Raigad—the capital of the Marathas—grew rich with the spoils of many a successful campaign. Such was indeed the result of strict discipline that was maintained by Shivaji the Great in his army.

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[57] See *Shivaji the Maratha,* p. 79.

Meanwhile the affairs of the Bijapur State went from bad to worse. In 1672 Ali Adil Shah died and the kingdom was plunged once again into a state of anarchy and that was exactly what the vigilant Maratha wanted. He at once took Panhala, plundered the foreign settlement at Hubli and ordered his fleet to raid the coast. Within two years the Bijapur troops were driven back to the walls of their capital and the Marathas occupied the territory as far as Miraj. Thus by this time Shivaji the Great had reconquered all his ceded territory from the Mughals and had defeated all his enemies in the open field. Bijapur was knocked out of the race; Golkonda was paralysed; the viceroy of the Dekhan was forced to look on helplessly as fort after fort was retaken from the Mughals and the Marathas plundered their country upto the very walls of Aurangabad. Verily had the great captain now established himself as an independent ruler of the Dekhan; he attained his goal. Shivaji the Great therefore felt the need of legitimising his conquests and get himself crowned lawful monarch of the kingdom which he had carved out for himself with his sword, the famous Bhawani. However strong his army and navy and whatever his unquestioned power of life and death over men as a *de facto* independent sovereign, theoretically he was still a subject, the rebel son of a vassal jahagirdar; to the Mughal Emperor he was no better than a mere zamindar. Then again as a mere private person, albeit powerful, his subjects owed him no legal allegiance; his promises, his treaties, or his grants of land could neither have the sanctity and validity of a sovereign act nor an assurance of permanence such as would come forth from the public act of a legally-constituted state. The principle of legitimacy has always held a powerful sway over the minds of the people. In the absence of legal sanction a conqueror, however mighty, at once partakes of the character of a parvenu. Napoleon himself at a future date could not get rid of this principle; so engrained was it in the medieval society both here and in Europe. The permanence and continuity of the political creation of Shivaji the Great, therefore, required that it should be set on a regular footing as the valid act of a Sovereign. There were other reasons why this wise step was called for. It was necessary to give a decent burial to the jealousy which the rapid rise of the Bhonsleys had created among the other Maratha families once their equals in social status or in certain cases even their superiors. These selfish men, the Ghorpades, the Manes, the Mores, the Sawants, the Dalvis, the Surves, the Shirkes, the Nimbalkars and the Ghadges, were content to remain vassals of Aurangzeb or Adil Shah and shamelessly took pride in calling themselves their loyal subjects; they had chosen the inglorious path of ease and had done very little to get any sort of redress to their suffering countrymen, nay they had actively opposed the Swarajya movement as traitors always do in every subject country; and yet when Shivaji the Great brought success to the cause by his extraordinary genius as a military leader of the Maratha nation, they foolishly affected to sneer at him as a usurper. They were unwilling in private life to concede any precedence to him, for example, to allow him to sit on a raised seat at state dinners. That Shivaji the Great was, like Washington, " the first in war, the first in peace and the first in the hearts of his countrymen "; that in championing the cause of the oppressed fellow Marathas, he had not counted on any sacrifice as too great; that in point of virtue, ability or morals he was definitely highly superior to these degenerate jahagirdars and far in advance of his times—these considerations were nothing in their eyes. Neither the superb beauty of his private character, nor the originality and loftiness of his ideal, neither the brilliant success his armies had met with nor the resourcefulness, the daring, the diplomatic skill, and cunning which he had shown in facing the several crises of his life, softened the rancour of the hatred of these dregs of human species. The perversity of their minds was only equalled by the depravity of their souls. A formal coronation alone was calculated to shut their mouths effectively and to assert his legitimate superiority over them as also to enable him to treat on equal terms with the kings of Bijapur and Golkonda.

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[58] See Rawlinson: *Shivaji the Maratha*, p. 81.

The formal assertion of his independent position was also desirable from the general Hindu point of view. Shivaji the Great was the champion of Hindu Religion and it became a necessity of the times to have the fact of Hindu Swarajya proclaimed under a Hindu Chhatrapati and thus to furnish the Marathas a national standard under which to resist with an united effort the danger of Aurangzeb's threatened invasion. The coronation rounded off and legalised the great work accomplished in nearly thirty years of ceaseless efforts. Curiously enough an English deputation under the leadership of Henry Oxenden was present at Raigad to witness the imposing ceremony (1674). The mission had arrived to seek redress for the raids on Surat, Hubli, and Karwar and to arrange a treaty.

The coronation of Shivaji the Great was a scene of the greatest splendour. Nothing like it had been witnessed in Maharashtra for several generations. The grand ceremony was performed strictly in accordance with the orthodox ritual by the greatest sanskrit theologian and controversialist then alive, Gagabhatt, a reputed Shastri of Banaras who had been specially invited for that purpose. Rawlinson says, "The guns of Raigad thundered volley after volley; the sound was caught up and repeated from fort to fort, till from end to end of the Sahyadris the roar of artillery for hundreds of miles, proclaimed to the world the birth of the Maratha nation. That night merry-making and rejoicing, music and dancing, gladdened the hearts of high and low in every hamlet of the Dekhan. In Raigad, the spoils of plundered cities stored for years, were poured out with lavish hand. Fifty thousand Brahmans were fed for a week and innumerable costly presents were distributed. Gagabhatt alone received £10,000." [59]

For the next two years no military operations of importance were undertaken. The crowned head of the Maratha nation wisely busied himself with measures intended to secure his conquests. The great king's last expedition was undertaken in 1676 when he set out with the largest Maratha army which had ever yet taken the field at one time ostensibly to assert his legitimate claim to his father's jahagir in the Karnatak but really to bring his stupid brother Venkoji under his own control and influence. Since the death of Shahaji, his younger son Venkoji had been in undisturbed enjoyment of the extensive Karnatak Jahagir. If he had managed the estate wisely with the help of his father's veteran ministers and particularly of Raghunath Narayan Hanmante, if he had transferred his allegiance as a vassal jahagirdar to his illustrious brother who was now the recognised head of the Marathas, perhaps Shivaji the Great would not have undertaken this campaign at all. But instead, he began to drive his own coach with the advice of his vulgar and unworthy friends and Hanmante, who was constantly treated with insults and whose influence in the government was systematically undermined, saw that Venkoji's mismanagement would soon bring ruin on the jahagir and disgrace to Shahaji's memory. Venkoji under these circumstances became insolent and openly defied his brother.

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[59] *Shivaji the Maratha,* pp. 84-85.

One day there was a stormy scene at the court; Hanmante extolled Shivaji the Great as a model king and taunted his master as a spiritless and an incapable man; Venkoji, not liking the minister's frankness, retorted by calling his brother a traitor and a rebel against his lawful sovereign. The disgusted minister left Tanjore and went to Satara to interview Shivaji the Great. The latter, for his own reasons, was maturing a plan for the invasion of the Karnatak during his illness at Satara and hence Hanmante found in the Raja a willing listener to his scheme. Shivaji the Great could not have for a moment tolerated, without a serious loss of prestige, his younger brother's arrogance and open defiance of his own authority. How could he allow his own younger brother to owe fealty to the Bijapur Durbar, a Muslim power, when he himself was looked upon as the natural leader of the Maratha nation? Hanmante only supplied him with a good excuse for the invasion. Let us now see why this expedition was already being planned.

Aurangzeb, though upto now busy with putting down revolts in the north and establishing his authority in that quarter, had never forgotten his scheme of annexing the whole Deccan to his Empire. Thus his presence was required at the capital; on the contrary he was too suspicious to delegate the work of the Deccan conquest to his generals. He, therefore, followed the policy of weakening the Deccan powers so that he should be in a position at a later date to sweep them off the political board himself with an overwhelming force.

Bahadur Khan, the Mughal viceroy, lacked both the ability and the army for reducing the Deccan and there was every likelihood of all the Deccan powers, including the Marathas, making common cause against the Mughals. So Aurangzeb always fomented internal dissensions by bribing everyone in power, by exciting jealousy between the Muslim states. So long as Shivaji the Great had not become a menace in the Emperor's eye, he considered Shivaji's raids into Bijapur and Golkonda territory as favourable to him.

At Bijapur on the death of Ali Adil Shah two factions, the Afghans and the Deccanis, were struggling for power. Khavas Khan was the head of the Deccani party while Abdul Karim headed the Afghans. Khavas Khan, who had been appointed the Regent by the dying King made an alliance with the Mughal viceroy. But he was murdered by Abdul Karim's party. Bahadur Khan now received orders to attack Bijapur and punish Abdul Karim for his treachery. When the war was proceeding Diller Khan, who as an Afghan was favourably disposed towards Abdul Karim, joined Bahadur Khan's army and a truce was called. Both the parties, the Mughals and the Bijapuris, entered into an offensive and defensive alliance for the subjugation of the Golkonda state.

Golkonda too was torn by internal strife. The new Abu Hussein was hostile to the Mughals and the two Brahmin brothers Madanna and Akanna guided his policy. The able minister Madanna saw the danger of the alliance between Diller Khan, the sworn enemy of Golkonda and Shivaji the Great and the Bijapur Regent and thus an alliance between Golkonda and the Marathas was inevitable. On his part Shivaji the Great had no illusion but that he was holding his kingdom on sufferance and that as soon as Golkonda was conquered Aurangzeb was sure to mobilise all his military resources against himself. At such a crisis he could hope to save himself only if he could fall back upon some strong positions in Southern India. His plan was therefore to create a new kingdom in the South from Bednore to Tanjore. He would then guard its northern frontier from Mughal attack by a line of forts, and extend his dominions to the south as far as possible. From this base he thought he would be able to take the offensive at a favourable opportunity and roll back the Mughal tide. The King's scheme was far-sighted and its wisdom was to be realised shortly when Rajaram could go to Jinji and defy the Mughal armies for a long time. Further the easy conquest of this outlying province would give another blow to the Bijapur Government as its possession would provide him with a new base for preparations against Bijapur itself. These then were the considerations which influenced Shivaji the Great in deciding upon the expedition. Mr. Sarkar, however, says that he was "looking about for some fresh field of gain".[60]

Further, the Bengali Historian remarks, "It is incredible that a born strategist like Shivaji could have really intended to annex permanently a territory on the Madras coast which was separated from his own dominions by two powerful and potentially hostile states like Bijapur and Golkonda and more than 700 miles distant from his capital. His aim I believe was merely to squeeze the country of its accumulated wealth and return home with the booty. The partition of his father's heritage was only a plea adopted to give a show of legality to this campaign of plunder."[61] Whatever the real motives of the "born strategist" it is clear that this Historian has not understood them, and so has misrepresented them. In the first place the Great Captain's strategy has been vindicated by subsequent events. In the second place Shivaji the Great was not considering anything to be permanent at this period; his object was only to save himself from the Mughal menace for the time being. Thirdly distance from the capital alone was not a bar to the conquest of a province *vide* the intention of his hero, Aurangzeb, to conquer the Deccan and even the South. Fourthly, the tottering and rotten Adilshahi Government was, as Sircar himself says, in no position to trouble Shivaji at this time.

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[60] *Shivaji and His Times*, p. 322.
[61] *Shivaji and His Times*, p. 325. Footnote.

Golkonda was admittedly friendly to the Raja. Both the states were far from being "powerful" and if anything they could not be "potentially hostile" in the face of the well-known Mughal designs on their very existence. Potentially, they were going to be the Great Raja's subordinate allies. There is thus nothing wrong with the "born strategist's" strategy, only the modern historian's vision is perverse. On the basis of French testimony from Pondichery, Mr. Sen has justly pointed out in his article on this expedition that Shivaji's motive in this distant campaign was not mere plunder but extension of his territory.[62] Some idea of his high motive can also be gathered from his remarkable letter to Maoji Raje Ghorpade written from Hyderabad in March 1677 wherein he urges his countrymen to bury the past and combine against the Adilshahi and wherein he lays down the principle of the Deccan for the Deccanis. (It is to be noted that Shivaji included in this word the Deccani Muslims too.) When the plan was finally formed, Shivaji the Great who left nothing to chance, made his diplomatic and other preparations and as usual his diplomacy completely triumphed against the Mughal viceroy of the Deccan. Bahadur Khan had no stomach for any more war with Shivaji the Great and was, further, open to money argument. The neutrality of the Deccan viceroy was purchased "by giving him a large sum of money, a part it would appear publicly and a part privately. That which was publicly received was styled tribute by the Mughals—an appellation to which Shivaji reconciled himself, even at this stage of his independence, by comparing it to the oil cake to his milch cow." [63]

Having thus secured his flank and rear, Shivaji the Great made adequate arrangements for the security of his kingdom during his long absence to Karnatic. Moro Trimbak Pingle (Peshwa) was entrusted with the general care of the kingdom as Regent and Annaji Datto was specially to look after the Konkan districts from Kalyan to Phonda, "strong garrisons and a large body of disposable infantry" being placed in his charge. He was also directed to assist the Peshwa.

Finally an alliance was made with Golkonda and close friendship and co-operation of the Qutub Shah was secured. Golkonda had already promised Shivaji an annual tribute of one lakh of hun for the defence of the realm. A shrewd diplomat, Pralhad Niraji, had been posted at Hyderabad as Maratha envoy. Shivaji the Great expected to get from Golkonda the expenses of the campaign and wrote to his envoy to arrange for a friendly interview between him and Qutub Shah. He avoided the least show of force in gaining his object but trusted to his personal charm and power of persuasion. Qutub Shah was at first afraid of such a personal meeting but on Pralhad Niraji's solemn oath in support of Shivaji's honesty of purpose he agreed to receive him. Shivaji the Great, then started from Raigad in January 1677 at the head of 30,000 horse and 40,000 infantry and carefully abstaining from plunder and maintaining perfect discipline among his vast horde proceeded on his march with the utmost regularity. Maddanna Pandit came out some distance to receive his distinguished guest and the day after his arrival Shivaji the Great had an interview with Qutub Shah. The two monarchs held a friendly consultation for three hours[64] and Abdul Hassam was so favourably impressed by the Maratha king's personal magnetism, character, ability, and the strength and discipline of his army that he readily granted whatever the latter wanted. A secret offensive and defensive alliance was concluded. The Sultan agreed to pay a subsidy of 3,000 hun a day and to send an army of 5,000 men to co-operate in the conquest of the Karnatak. A train of artillery with its equipments was also supplied and probably a large sum of money as advance payment of the stipulated subsidy. In return for this aid Shivaji the Great seems to have promised the Sultan a share "of such parts of his conquests in the Karnatak as had not belonged to his father Shahaji."[65]

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[62] See C. V. Vaidya: *Shivaji the Founder of the Maratha Swarajya*, p. 279.

[63] Grant Duff: *History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, p. 233.

After a month spent at Haidrabad in making his arrangements, Shivaji the Great marched due south towards Krishna. The fortress of Jinji, which afterwards became famous as the seat of the Maratha Government under Rajaram,[66] was taken together with the Kolar and Bangalore districts. These districts formed a part of the ancestral territory and Venkoji in great despondency was forced to agree to the surrender of half of his possessions to his masterful brother. The only opposition that Shivaji the Great met with was from Sher Khan but he was enveloped and was captured with his entire army. Thus this campaign was a complete success and the boldness of its design and neatness of its execution place the Great Maratha Captain, remark Kincaid and Parasnis, in the front rank of the world's greatest generals.[66] Like Caesar in Spain "he came, he saw, he conquered." "With two enemies one on either flank and a doubtful ally on his line of communications, he had crossed India from west to east and back again from east to west. In the course of 18 months at a distance of 700 miles from his base he had conquered a territory as large as his former kingdom. While a single reverse would have been fatal, he had not suffered even a single check. Victory had succeeded victory; town had fallen after town. As he went he organised two conquests; and when he returned to Raigad as he now did his new possessions were securely bound together from sea to sea by a line of fortified strongholds held by garrisons brave to the death and devoted to his cause."[67]

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[64] The interview of the two monarchs Shivaji and Qutub Shah reminds us of the interview at Tilsit between Napoleon and Alexander. In both the cases it was the magnetism of the man of action that brought about invaluable results.

[65] Grant Duff: *History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, p. 235.

[66] *History of the Maratha People*, p. 96.

In the meanwhile Bahadur Khan, the viceroy of the Deccan, was recalled as his truce with Shivaji the Great was not approved of by Aurangzeb and Diller Khan was ordered to carry out the combined attack on Golkonda, true to the Emperor's policy of exhausting the Deccan states. But the invaders were met by an overwhelming force and were compelled soon to retreat. Diller Khan then quarrelled with his Bijapur allies and Siddi Masaud Khan, the new regent, sent an urgent message to Shivaji the Great piteously begging him to come to the rescue of Bijapur in its dire need. Shivaji therefore returned to the Deccan by way of Bellary which he took *en route.* He had no wish to see his ancient foe fall a victim to the Mughals, particularly because the Mughals at Bijapur would be troublesome and powerful neighbours. He therefore made a diversion in their favour and sending forces to ravage Mughal territory, eventually forced Diller Khan to retreat. As usual Shivaji the Great was carrying all before him when sud-

[66] *History of the Maratha People,* p. 96.
[67] Kincaid and Parasnis, p. 103.

denly at Raigad a disease of the knee brought on a violent attack of fever.[68] Worn out by constant exertion in the cause of his country and religion, the great warrior succumbed to his illness and passed away on the 5th April 1680 after having consoled the weeping assemblage with assurances of the spirit's immortality in spite of the perishableness of the body.

Domestic troubles had clouded Shivaji the Great's last days. The recent rebellion of his eldest son and heir apparent, Sambhaji, had brought out clearly the danger which threatened the new Maratha kingdom. Sambhaji was a profligate, capricious and violent youth, destitute of every spark of honour or of patriotism and to leave him master of the Maratha state would be to invite sure ruin on the Maratha nation. A premonition of the coming events made the Great Raja gloomy and as there was no good alternative even his mind, accustomed as it was to solve difficult questions, was perplexed. Rajaram, the second son, was a lad of 18 and his accession would have meant a regency. But a council of regency was also unthinkable. There was such mutual jealousy and discord among the old ministers of the state especially between Moropant, the Peshwa, and Annaji Datto, the viceroy of the Konkan, that the attempt would have ended as sure as anything in a civil war. A division of the kingdom was first thought of but the idea was very wisely discarded. To add to these troubles there were the intrigues of his queens who maintained a regular conflict in the palace through their maids. Soyrabai, the mother of Rajaram in particular, felt herself neglected and tried all sorts of love-charms to to win back her husband's affection from her more youthful rivals. The question of succession added fuel to the fire. During his whole military career there were hardly any reverses; he achieved all that his heart desired and left behind an independent Hindu State comprising in its scope all the Marathi speaking districts and more. Only in one enterprise he did not succeed; he could not take Janjira. The rocky island of Janjira was defended by the Siddies, a race notable for its efficient naval warfare. They were skilful and daring mariners and received constant help from the English. Shivaji the Great was weak in artillery and therefore was unable to conquer them in spite of repeated attempts. He had however created a navy and built forts for the protection of his coast and had he got more time to devote to this enterprise exclusively we feel sure the extraordinary genius of Shivaji the Great would have triumphed on sea as much as it did on land. His achievements in the naval warfare with the Siddis of Janjira and the English, such as they were, were not mean. He fortified the island of Khanderi and held it in the face of the superior naval forces of the English and the Siddis. What was remarkable was that the importance of navy did not escape the attention of the Great King even at this early period. He saw, with his infallible judgment, that without a strong fleet there will be neither peace for his Konkan subjects nor security for his kingdom and that he would be liable to attack from his enemies at this most vulnerable point. Shivaji the Great was not only a warrior of the highest rank but was also a great statesman and a far-sighted administrator. His civil reforms and his achievements will therefore form our chief topics for the next Chapter.

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[68] See Rawlinson: *Shivaji the Maratha*, p. 88.

CHAPTER IV

PRINCIPLES OF MARATHA POLITY UNDER SHIVAJI THE GREAT

Shivaji as a civil ruler

SHIVAJI's greatness as a first class military leader is unquestionable but his title to fame and to the deep reverence and great admiration of posterity does not rest on his military exploits alone. Great as are his achievements in the domain of war, his conquests in the arts of peace are greater still. He is a civil administrator *par excellence*. Always at war with his neighbours, the Mughals, the kings of Bijapur and Golkonda, the Siddis of Janjira, the Portuguese, who were ever on the lookout for an opportunity to destroy his infant kingdom, he yet found time, like Napoleon, to build up his civil institutions. Scott-Waring writes, "While Shivaji carried on his predatory warfare, he was not inattentive to the growing interests of his state."[1] Those of us who seek to exonerate the Peshwas for their failure to pay attention to civil institutions of the Maratha Empire, and to carry out necessary reforms on the ground of want of time, would do well to remember this fact. Great men, like Shivaji, Akbar, Napoleon, Fredrick the Great, make time, if they do not get time, to carry out their civil policy. In his administrative measures, as in his conception of the political ideal of Hindavi Swarajya, Shivaji the Great, as we shall presently see, was far in advance of his times. His administrative system marks him out as the greatest statesman not only of his own times but also of all times. His two aims in evolving a regular government were the security of the Maratha State, which he ceaselessly toiled to bring into existence and which was to develop duly into an All-India Hindu Empire, and the happiness and contentment of his subjects both Hindu and Muslim. But for the civil reforms of the far-sighted king, we would have been forced to bow our heads in shame before the malicious Anglo-Indian historians like Dr. Vincent Smith who have characterised the Maratha State, even under Shivaji the Great, as a robber state. Indeed there are other reasons why we cannot accept the Marathas as mere robbers and plunderers. But the surest and most effective method of silencing the voice of calumny is to point out the principles on which the fabric of the Maratha State had been raised by the master mind of its founder. Great as warrior, greater still as a Statesman, the Maratha "Hero" deserves to be gratefully remembered by modern Indians, for, it was he who has by his example and life-work added a cubit to our moral stature. Let us therefore notice the basic principles of the Maratha government in the 17th century without going unnecessarily into the details of the system.

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[1] *History of the Marathas*, p. 96.

THE KING

The pivot of the government was the King himself. He was the supreme legislator, though always with the help of the shastras; he was the supreme executive, the leader of the host in arms, the guardian of the "King's peace" and finally he was the supreme Judge. Thus sovereignty was undivided. The king as the head of the state was the keystone of the social arch. He represented the principle of unity and harmony in the society as he regulated directly and indirectly all the aspects of the state life. He was the one indispensable condition of the proper functioning of the various institutions of the Maratha State. He was at once a guarantee of the happiness and prosperity of his subjects whether Hindu or Muslim, the protector of their Dharma (both Muslim and Hindu) and the sheet anchor of stability and security of the State. "*Rájá Kálasya Káranam*" was therefore as much true of Shivaji the Great as of any other ancient king. He was an ideal Chhatrapati.

This theory of the kingship was ancient in its outlook. Shivaji the Great was, therefore, a good king from the shastric point of view. The supreme role could not be played by a robber chief and hence the unwarranted aspersions on the memory of a good king of his astounding civil ability show clearly that the treachery, murders, plundering raids, etc. of his reign were merely the necessary accidents of his position and his times.

Shivaji the Great was not a king by human sanction but by divine right; he was not simply *primus inter pares,* but one raised to supreme pre-eminence by dint of his being the truest and greatest Kshatriya of his times. He was the lineal descendant of Rama, Asoka and Akbar in the spiritual sense and that fact the coronation ceremony proclaimed to the world.

The Central Government: Ashta Pradhan Council

The king had thus the whip-hand of the administration but he was assisted by a council of eight ministers. All these ministers, the Prime Minister (Mukhya-Pradhan), the Auditor (Amatya), the Chronicler (Mantri), the Foreign Secretary (Sumanta), the Superintendent (Sachiv), the Ecclesiastical Head (Pandit Rao), the Commander-in-Chief (Senapati) and the Chief Justice (Nyayadhish) had their respective duties definitely fixed for them.[2] We do not know when precisely this council was first organised. At the time of the coronation their number had risen to eight and they had stood on either side of the throne to pour holy water over the king's head. The number of ministers continued to be eight till the death of Shivaji the Great. These ministers held office during the king's pleasure and were liable to be dismissed either for incompetence or misbehaviour. None of the public offices, whether high or low, were allowed by Shivaji the Great to assume hereditary character. The councillors were frequently changed for example Sabhasad says that Shamrao Nilkanth was the predecessor of Moro Trimbak Pingle in the Peshwaship. Similarly Tukoji Chor Maratha, Mankoji Dahatonde, Netaji Palkar, Pratap Rao Gujar and Hambir Rao Mohite succeeded each other as commander-in-chief owing to his predecessor's dismissal or death. Also before Annaji Datto and Dattaji Trimbak, Nilo Sondev and Gangaji Mangaji had served as Surnis and Waknis respectively. He maintained the freshness and vigour of the government unimpaired by the two principles of anti-heredity and frequent renewal. Shivaji the Great used to hold a council of his principal officers from time to time both before and after his coronation. Though he happened to appoint six commanders-in-chief in succession, in not a single case, a near relative of the last incumbent was selected.[3] In his regime career was open to talent only; like Napoleon and Akbar he would recognise no other claim. It was impossible under his system for any officer to become the founder of a new family jahagir as in the days of his short-sighted successors. Shivaji the Great strictly laid down that no jahagir should be assigned to any civil or military office. No soldier or military officer had anything to do with the collection of revenue. The balance of their dues was paid by "varats" (orders) either on the central government or on the district establishments or in cash from the treasury. None but the Karkuns had authority over the lands and payments to the army, the militia, and the garrison used to be made by them. These wise regulations produced the desired effect and for a time made the growth of feudalism in the Maratha State quite impossible. The result was, as Ranade[4] remarks, none of the great men, who distinguished themselves in Shivaji's times were able to hand over to their descendants large landed estates. They could not found ancient families such as those which Shahu's ministers succeeded in doing in the early part of the 18th century.

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[2] An official paper (Kanujabta) was drawn up in the first year of the Abhisheka era enumerating the duties of the eight councillors and other heads of departments—Sabhasad, p. 83.

From the Kanujabta (memorandum) and other reports (papers), Shivaji the Great does not seem to have aimed at a bureaucratic form of government.[5] It was an enlightened despotism, like the rule of Fredrick the Great, depending for its success on the ability and practical sagacity of the king himself. But the inherent defect of this system is that it does not guarantee the continuity of either ability or sagacity. Such a system of government is unworkable in the absence of a capable and judicious ruler. Ranade would like to compare the Ashta Pradhan council to Viceroy's executive council in its essential characteristics. He says, "The conception which lies at the bottom of both systems is the same, of having a council of the highest officers of the state, sitting together to assist the king in the proper discharge of his duties."[6] But the resemblance between the two systems is more apparent than real; the principles underlying the two are not identical. The government of India is a bureaucracy, subordinate officers being responsible to the heads of their departments who are mainly responsible for initiating the departmental policy. It is true they hold joint meetings to deliberate upon questions affecting departments other than their own and upon certain grave questions of policy but the division of duties is clear-cut.[7] Six out of eight of Shivaji's ministers had to perform military duty as occasion arose and all the eight had to attend a Hazir Majalasi to hear appeals in civil and criminal cases.[8] The ministers of Shivaji's Council were frequently absent on distant expeditions and some of them had further the heavy charge of the provincial governments.[9] There was another difference. In theory the Viceroy can overrule the decisions of his Executive Council but in practice he is ordinarily supposed to be guided by their advice. The function of Shivaji's council was merely advisory; the Pradhans were the Kings' agents, had no powers to dictate the state policy and had to carry out Shivaji's general instructions or supervise the details of their respective departments. It is quite possible that Shivaji the Great never interferred with the Ecclesiastical and Accounts departments as these were highly technical in their work. Theoretically he was not bound even to consult them. Dr. Sen, therefore, says, "Shivaji's ministers cannot be regarded as heads of departments and his government was by no means a bureaucracy. It was, if anything, an autocracy. But the autocrat fortunately for his people was a practical statesman and acted as a 'Benevolent Despot.'

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[3] Of course the case of Suryaji Malusare, who was appointed to succeed his brother Tanaji as Subhedar of the Mavli forces, is different. In his case the officer had rendered distinguished service and it deserved public recognition.

[4] Ranade: *Rise of the Maratha Power*, pp. 129-130.

[5] Rawlinson says the civil system of Shivaji the Great resembled in its essential respects the present bureaucratic system of government—*Shivaji the Maratha*, p. 94.

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[6] *Rise of the Maratha Power*, pp. 126-127.

[7] For the duties of Shivaji's Ashta Pradhans, see translation of the Kanu Jabhta of the year 1 of the coronation era given by Dr. Sen in his *Administrative System of the Marathas*, pp. 50-54. See also Justice Telang's summary of the duties of Pandit Rao in Ranade's *Rise of the Maratha Power*, p. 261.

[8] The first Pandit Rao was also called upon to render diplomatic service as an envoy to Jai Singh.

[9] When the ministers were away from the capital their mutaliks or agents represented them at the court. This arrangement was made in the interests of good government.

[10] *Administrative System of the Marathas*, p. 49.

His ministers were his servants, bound to carry out his instructions and his government had more resemblance with those of his Hindu and Muhammadan predecessors than with the British Government of to-day." [10]

The council of Ashta Pradhans was also not a cabinet in the modern sense. For example, it had none of the following features of the British cabinet system,[11] viz. (1) the exclusion of the Sovereign, (2) close correspondence between the cabinet and the Parliamentary majority for the time being, (3) political homogeneity, (4) collective responsibility, and (5) the ascendency of the Prime Minister. Another interesting fact about the powers of the Ashta Pradhans was that they could not select their own subordinates. These were usually appointed by the King himself. Mutaliks were expected, as under the Muslim system, to act on behalf of their absent ministers and in their interests but even these were appointed by the Supreme Head of the State.

Equal in status to the eight ministers but outside the Council, the Chitnis or the Secretary was the influential person. The Private Secretary of an autocratic king always enjoys great influence. Balaji Avji,[12] Shivaji's Chitnis, was an able man and it seems he had been actually offered a seat in the Council but the modest Prabhu statesman declined the honour. The Chitnis was relieved to a great extent by others, e.g. the Fadnis, Gadnis, Parasnis, etc. The Fadnis was originally a subordinate secretarial Officer but during the Peshwa regime he rose to great power and authority. Besides their staff the Ashta Pradhans had under them the officers in charge of the eighteen Karkhanas and twelve Mahals. In his departmental duties each Pradhan was assisted by a staff of eight clerks.[13]

Everything depended on the personal qualities and ability of the Sovereign. Except the constant fear of the Muslim invasion there was nothing to restrain him. Through all these changes, both bloody and bloodless, the immemorial village communities survived unaffected in their internal organisations. Thus this gigantic engine, with Ashta Pradhans and the Chitnis, with secretarial officers like the Fadnis, the Sabnis and the Potnis, with officers of the eighteen Karkhanas and twelve Mahals and a vast array of clerks and military men, was created to execute the King's designs and to carry out his orders. This stupendous machine worked well so long as there was a good mechanic, like Shivaji the Great, to tend it; so long as the oiling and greasing was done by a master mind. But in the hands of his less competent successors it began to creak and work jauntily and finally in the absence of the proper spirit and ability it completely broke down. Shivaji the Great tried to carry on the government by discussion or consultation as far as possible but even the modest experiment failed because the social tendencies of the backward Maratha society were against it.

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[11] Marriott: *English Political Institutions*, pp. 78-83.

[12] He had been entrusted with the exceedingly delicate task of taking down the behests of the goddess Bhavani communicated through Shivaji's mouth.

[13] Grant Duff, Vol. I, p. 191.

Finance and Revenue Principles

Shivaji's revenue policy closely resembled the system[14] of Malik Ambar who was one of the greatest statesmen of the preceding generation but Shivaji's system was a distinct improvement on that of Malik Ambar for it was more scientific and methodical. There were different standards and units of measurement and Shivaji the Great had to fix on a standard unit before he could order out a systematic survey. Accuracy in measurement had also to be secured by substituting a Kathi (measuring rod) for a rope. It appears to us that Shivaji instinctively felt that there could be no higher cementing force for national solidarity than uniformity of standards for all his subjects alike and identity of interests between the rulers and the ruled. He then ordered a survey settlement, and the famous Annaji Datto was entrusted with the work of surveying the Konkan. Annaji Datto issued a circular letter[15] to village officers and after a most careful and comprehensive scrutiny fixed the rent at 33 per cent of the gross produce. Later on, when all the taxes and extra cesses were abolished,[16] the King demanded a consolidated rent of 40 per cent. The principles of Tagai and Istawa were not unknown in Shivaji's time. Thus in Shivaji's kingdom, new settlers were encouraged to come and settle. Here again we have a glimpse of Shivaji's many-sided genius for even in the midst of constant warfare he devoted his attention to the furtherance of agriculture. Like the Physiocrats at a later date Shivaji recognised that agriculture was the mainstay of the state. Moro Pingle, it is on record, also granted rent-free land for founding a market town.[17] Though the extra cesses had been abolished,[18] the customs duties were retained. No one could travel without a passport from a proper authority and customs officers had been stationed at Kalyan.[19]

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[14] It is very difficult for us to say that Shivaji consciously copied the administrative system from his predecessors both Muslims and Hindu. That he imbibed the legacy and improved upon it is certain. He found certain institutions ready at hand and improved upon them without caring to overhaul them completely as he had seen them work with success under Dadoji Kondadev. This does not mean, however, that he was a blind imitator incapable of original conception. We must remember that the times he lived in demanded more of originality in execution.

[15] This circular was issued in 1678. See Rajwade: *Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhane*, Khand 15, pp. 368-370. It may be noted that the Konkan survey settlement was not the only work of its kind; mention is made of similar work being done by Moro Pingle, the Peshwa, with regard to Shirval—Refer to Rajwade, Vol. XX, *Marathyanchya Itahasachi Sadhane*, pp. 94-96.

We know how much the peasant had to pay for each bigha of the cultivated land under the Peshwas from several published documents, but no such data is available for the Shivaji's period. Jervis, in his *Statistical Survey of the Konkan*, however, gives exact rates which were fixed for the harvests of Rice, Mehni, Wari, Harik, etc. Besides the principal harvests, a second crop of Sugarcane, Hemp, Turmeric, etc. was often raised by the peasants on first class lands and these were also assessed at a special rate according to their nature and deteriorating effect on the land.[20] When a village was assessed, uncultivable waste lands were generally excluded.[21] But waste lands were gradually brought under the plough and these warkus lands were at first free from assessment and afterwards were taxed at a moderate rate. We must have some idea of the taxes and cesses that a peasant or an artisan had to pay in those days, if we are to appreciate correctly the value of Shivaji's revenue reforms. For instance, a peasant had to pay his land revenue to the state, to give a certain measure of grains to the village officers and

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[16] Jervis: Statistical Survey of the Konkan, p. 93.

[17] See Rajwade, *Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhane,* Vol. XX, p. 98.

[18] Some of these dues continued to be levied till the death of Shivaji and a few even survived him. In a document dated 1675 the tax of Farmasi is mentioned. Thus it seems probable that all these cesses were not abolished See Rajwade, *Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhane,* Vol. XV, p. 173.

[19] See Fryer—*A new Account,* p. 123.

[20] For the figures refer to Jerwis, *Statistical Survey of the Konkan,* pp. 94-97.

[21] See Rajwade—*Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhane,* Vol. XX, p. 94.

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when he brought his vegetable to the market the Patil and the Kulkarni would take a handful in pursuance of an old practice. He had also to pay several other pattis like the Mhimpati, Telpati, Tutpati, Jangampati, Dasarapati, Inampati, Sardeshmukhpati. In all some fifty taxes, cesses and abwabs (extra duties) had to be paid.[22] Most of these taxes were later on abolished by Shivaji the Great and the land revenue was consolidated into a 40 per cent share as noticed above. Thus we see how Shivaji was anxious to protect the peasants from arbitrary exactions. The result of his flexible revenue system and the suitable measures he took for the extension of cultivation and improvement of agriculture was to be seen in the prosperity and plenty of Shivaji's subjects. Jervis remarks, "In the midst of all this confusion, warfare and general disloyalty, the state of the revenue and population is said to have prospered." [23] The reason of this satisfactory economic condition of the peasantry was, as Mr. Pingle Kennedy says, that "The peasant knew what he had to pay and he seems to have been able to pay this without any great oppression." [24]

REVENUE DIVISIONS AND REVENUE OFFICERS

The Swarajya,[25] for revenue purposes, was divided into a number of Prants consisting of two or more districts. According to Ranade [26] there were in all sixteen such provinces; but in the jabta drawn up by Shankarji Malhar in the early days of Shahu's reign the number of Swarajya provinces has been mentioned as thirty-seven. It is quite possible that many changes had been made in the territorial divisions before the accession of Shahu.

We have seen above why Shivaji had replaced the old agency of collecting revenue by a new one; he had appointed his own servants to do that work directly. But the old hereditary officers such as the Patil and the Kulkarni in the village and the Deshmukh and the Deshpande in the district had been left in the enjoyment of their old dues. For revenue purposes he modified the old Muslim divisions of Mauja, Pargana, Sarkar and Subha into Mauj, Tarf and Prant. The officer in charge of a tarf was called Havaldar or Karkun and the officer in charge of a Prant was styled as Subhedar, Karkun or Mukhya Deshadhikari. To supervise the work of the Subhedars, a Sarsubhedar was sometimes appointed over several Prants. Like the Kamavisdars and Mamlatdars of the Peshwa period these officers had to look after all the branches of administration. The Subhedar had under him the usual staff consisting of eight subordinate officers. The Subhedar usually had an annual salary of four hundred Hons which included the palanquin allowance. Other officers received a salary proportionate to their ranks. In the case of Muzumdar the Government also sanctioned a small allowance for the upkeep of an Abdagir to be carried on public occasions. The Kamavisdars and the Mamlatdars in the Peshwa regime were generally allowed to transmit their office to their heirs. But it should be remembered that under Shivaji's system no public office was allowed to become hereditary, as we have pointed out above. Another precaution was also taken. Like our modern officers, his Karkuns, Havaldars, and Subhedars were, as a rule, transferred from one district to another and from one province to another.[27] This clearly testifies to the wisdom and foresight of the Great Maratha statesman who was alive to the evil effects which followed the hereditary system.

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[22] For a list of these cesses and abwabs refer to: Rajwade, *Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhane*, Vols. XV-XVI-XX. Some of these taxes were probably levied once in a lifetime, some on special occasions while others were confined to particular localities.

[23] *Statistical Survey of the Konkan*, p. 93.

[24] *History of the Great Mughals* ", Vol. II, p. 125.

[25] The provinces under Shivaji's rule as distinguished from Monglai or provinces under Muslim rulers.

[26] *Rise of the Maratha Power*, pp. 117-118.

Against the excellent set-up of Shivaji's administration Dr. Fryer, however, brings the charges of corruption and oppression and cruelty of his revenue officers. The English traveller tells us of the "hungry looks that he perceived on the government face, and of the small present he gave.[28] He further says that these revenue officers " are neither for Public Good or common honesty but their own private interest only." He continues [29]— " It is a general calamity and much to be deplored to hear the complaints of the poor people that remain or are rather compelled to endure the slavery of Seva Gi. The Desais have land imposed upon them at double the former rates and if they refuse to accept it on these hard conditions they are carried to prison; there they are famished almost to death; racked and tortured most inhumanly. . . . They have in Limbo several Brahmins whose flesh they tear with pincers heated red-hot. . . ." Fryer was of opinion that even the Bijapur rule was to be preferred to that of Shivaji the Great.

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[27] Mr. Bhaskar V. Bhat has patiently compiled a list of officers who were thus transferred from official letters and documents published in 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th and 20th volumes of Mr. Rajwade—See Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Mandal—Tritiya Sammelan Vritta, pp. 128-131. This principle, as Mr. Bhat points out, continued down to the first decade of the 18th century so far as the appointment of Mudradharis was concerned.

[28] *A New Account of the East Indias & Persia,* p. 127.

[29] *Ibid,* pp. 146-147.

If Fryer's account is true, the state of the country must have been indeed very terrible. The weakness for presents may perhaps be pardonable but the charge of cruelty to Brahmins and oppression is a serious one. Public opinion in those days did not consider it amiss if a Havaldar sometimes accepted a small present for granting a traveller his passport or for redressing the grievances of an aggrieved petitioner. In the seventeenth century, public officers whether Asiatic or European were never overscrupulous.[30] Multiplicity of their duties made them a bit prone to corruption. But good kings always exercised a strict control over them. Shivaji the Great was particularly very keen about the success and purity of his government and it was the aim of his endeavours to see that his administration compared favourably with that of his Muslim neighbours.[31] With this object in view he had taken care to make sound regulations and to establish an efficient secret intelligence department to watch over the conduct of his servants.[32] Further the Pant Amatya and the Pant Sachiva supervised the work of District and Provincial officers. Ranade tells us that "the district accounts had to be sent to these officers and were then collected together and irregularities detected and punished."[33]

It would be a wonder if in spite of the precautions Shivaji's

[30] For the tyranny and corruption of the European officers of the company in the 18th century, see Lecky—*History of England in the 18th Century.*

[31] Rajwade: *Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhane,* Vol. VIII, p. 24.

[32] To employ spies to keep a watch over the conduct of public officers was an ancient practice. See Mahabharat—Shantii Parva LXIX 8-12, 52; LXXIX 14-16; XCI, 50; LXXXVI, 20-21; *Agni Purana* (edited by Manmath Nath Dutt) CCXX, 17-22; Kautilya's *Arthashastra* translated by R. Sharma Shastry, p. 35. In the Mughal Empire news-recorders were regular officers as distinguished from secret spies but the functions of the two overlapped. See Beni Prasad: *History of Jehangir,* pp. 115-116.

[33] *Rise of the Maratha Power,* p. 125.

revenue officers worked really as arbitrarily as Fryer would have us believe.

As regards the charge of cruelty and oppression we must say that Fryer does not seem to have based his naration on personal experience or any first-hand knowledge. The memory of Shivaji the Great is still cherished by his countrymen as that of an ideal king and his institutions are referred to with admiration. A king who took pride in proclaiming himself Go-Brahman Pratipalak (Protector of Brahmins and Cows) could not really have tortured his Brahmin officers with "red-hot pincers". The just king's character also does not warrant a belief in Fryer's story. Let alone torturing any Brahmin, Shivaji the Great was known never to have offered any insult to holy men and holy places of his Muslim enemies. Even the highly partial Khafi Khan had to pay, grudingly though, a compliment to the Maratha Hero on that score.[34] We have already seen how he had striven to save the poor peasants from the tyranny of the Deshmukhs and Deshpandes. It is therefore quite improbable that he would tolerate any lands being forced on the Desais at an exorbitant rate. Dellon, a French Physician who visited the western coast about the same time as Fryer, remarks about Shivaji, "His subjects are pagans like himself. But he tolerates all religions and is looked upon as one of the most politic princes in those parts." [35] Evidently therefore Fryer's story seems to be baseless. Corruption there was to some extent and instances of tyranny and misrule may have occurred here and there. In the midst of a crowded military career, certain irregularities may have possibly escaped the vigilant eye of the king. "But Fryer seems to have dipped his brush in the black dye too frequently while painting a picture of Shivaji's country." [36] Grant Duff holds that "these districts taken by Shivaji from Bijapur which had been under the management of farmers and direct agents of government probably experienced great benefit by the change." [37]

A small income was derived from mints besides land revenue and customs duties.[38] But the income from these three sources did not add so much to Shivaji's treasury as did the chouth and sardeshmukhi.

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[34] See Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 260.

[35] See "A Voyage to the East India", pp. 56-57.

[36] Dr. Sen—*Administrative System of the Marathas,* p. 106.

[37] *History of the Marathas,* Vol. I, p. 188.

[38] Shivaji had his mint at Raigad. Mr. Bhave has described a small but rare Shivrai Hone in the Bharat I. S. Mandal's museum. See Fifth Sammelan Vritta, p. 121.

Military System of Shivaji the Great

Shivaji depended largely upon forts for the defence of his kingdom. Before his death he possessed not less than 250 forts and strongholds, every Taluka or Pargana having a protecting fort. Scott-Waring says that "His forts extended over the vast range of mountains which skirt the western shore of India. Regular fortification barred the open approaches; every pass was commanded by forts; every step and overhanging rock was occupied as a station to roll down great masses of stone which made their way to the bottom and impeded the labouring march of cavalry, elephants and carriages." [39] In those days forts were the very life of a kingdom and hence Shivaji the Great used to prize them highly, granting large sums either for building new ones or for their upkeep and repairs.[40] Lokahitawadi says "Shivaji Raja was famous for his forts."

These hill forts were impregnable owing to their natural strength and did not require strong garrisons. In those days of low public morality all the practical sagacity of Shivaji was required to guard himself against disloyalty and treachery. The golden key was a surer means of opening the gates of a fort than the military prowess. Another fact which he had to bear in mind in making his regulations was the necessity of conciliating the three principal castes—the Brahmins, the Marathas, and the Prabhus—by distributing the responsible posts equally among them. He, therefore, never left a single officer in entire charge of the fort and its garrison. Secondly, the three principal officers of the fort were appointed from different castes; and thirdly, they were frequently transferred from one fort to another. Every fort was placed under three officers of equal status, viz. the Havaldar, the Sabnis and the Sarnobat. These three were to carry on the administration jointly. The Havaldar and the Sarnobat were selected from the Maratha caste and the Sabnis from all classes of Brahmins. The provisions and military stores were in the charge of a Prabhu officer called Karkhanis. Under his supervision all accounts of income and expenditure were to be written. Thus was fidelity ensured, the three officers[41] working in co-operation and also serving as checks to one another. A single traitor was thus unable to deliver the fort to the enemy. Minute directions were given for the efficient and vigilant management of his forts and the king himself recruited all soldiers whether musketeers, spearsmen, archers or swordsmen after a careful personal inspection and after taking security from the men already in service for every new soldier. The Ramoshis and Patwaris kept watch outside the ramparts and got a small remuneration.

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[39] *History of the Marathas*, pp. 96-97.
[40] Rajwade—*Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhane*, Vol. VIII, pp. 17-19.

Shivaji's were never paper regulations; they were very strictly enforced. One instance would be enough to show with what care the Great Raja used to see that his regulations were properly observed. It was one of the duties of the Havaldar not to admit anyone, friend or foe alike, to the fort during night. Early in the morning he was to open the principal gates with his own hands. These duties were never allowed to be relegated to anyone else though in certain other duties the Havaldar was to act jointly with his colleagues. Shivaji the Great tested the efficiency of his Havaldars mainly in their proper control of the gates and any slackness shown in following the rules implicitly were severely punished.[42] Thus it will be seen that not one of Shivaji's forts could be betrayed to his enemies. Yet it is significant that all his precautions could not prevent stray cases of treason and corruption.[43]

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[41] For details of their official duties refer to the Kanujabta of the year I of the coronation era.

[42] One night Shivaji the Great went to Panhala and professing that he was being hotly pursued by the enemy, demanded admittance to the fort. The Havaldar pointed out respectfully that the king's regulation did not allow the gates to be opened at that hour. However, he offered to check the enemy with his fort guns and advised the king to wait under the circumstances near the gates till the following morning. The king used threats and arguments but still the gates were not opened. In the morning the Havaldar unlocked and unbolted the gates and approached the king with clasped hands. Then he said, "I have done wrong; Your Majesty should punish me according to my deserts." But the king who knew how to appreciate merit and sense of duty in his officers, immediately promoted the man while those who failed in this test, Shivadigvijaya tells us, were promptly degraded or dismissed.

[43] When Shivaji was absent in the camp of Jaisingh, Keso Narayan Sabnis had the entire charge of Raigad for the time being. He, on that occasion, misappropriated a large sum from public funds. See Rajwade—M.I.S. Vol. VIII, p. 7. Mr. Rajwade in the same Vol. (p. 11) gives another case, of rebellion which had taken place in 1663 in the fort of Sinhagad.

Shivaji the Great used to anticipate difficulties and was always alert in providing for them beforehand. He generally stored large quantities of grain and other provisions in his forts to be able to meet any siege. Towards the close of his career in 1671-72 he decided to raise money from each Mahal and set apart a sum of one lakh and twenty-five thousand rupees as a reserve fund to be spent only when war would begin with the Mughals and money would not be available from any other source. This money was not to be used for any other ordinary government work.[44] Similarly he noticed that the workmen grew discontented when they did not receive their wages in time. He, therefore, set aside a sum for building and repair works alone.[45] Shivaji the Great must have clearly grasped the principles of sound finance when he took care to see that there was adequate reserve and surplus. What the arms of defence were we do not know for certain. Of course Shivaji had an artillery department and we know from Orme that " He had previously purchased eighty pieces of cannons and lead sufficient for all his match-lock from the French Director at Surat." [46] " There were match-lockmen and archers and the enemy was sometimes assailed with rockets, musket shorts, bombs and stones." [47] But Scott-Waring remarks that " His artillery was very contemptible and he seems seldom to have used it but against the island of Gingerah." [48] Shivaji's soldiers used also to roll down big stones against their enemies while labouring up the steep sides of their inaccessible forts and this weapon carried as certain death as bullets whenever they hit their mark.[49] If stones did not suffice to check the progress of the enemy the Maratha soldiers would sally forth sword in hand and attack the besiegers at close quarters.

Shivaji's infantry was carefully divided into regiments, brigades, and divisions with well-graded lower and higher officers, viz. Naik, Havaldar, Jumledar, Hazari, and the Sarnobat. The cavalry was divided into two classes, the bargirs and the Shiledars. The state used to equip with horse and arms the bargir while the latter brought his own horse and came sometimes with a body of troops armed and equipped at his own expense. Shiledars were under the jurisdiction of the paga and were inferior in status. The gradations of officers were the same as in the infantry but with higher strength.

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[44] See Rajwade—M. I. Sadhane, Vol. VIII, pp. 16-17.

[45] *Ibid*, pp. 18-19.

[46] *Historical Fragments of the Mughal Empire*, p. 38.

[47] Sarkar—*Shivaji and his Times*.

[48] *History of the Marathas*, p. 102.

[49] Fryer—*A new account of the East Indies & Persia*, p. 123.

Shivaji the Great had a fine sense of kingship, holding that the king was a king first and a Hindu or Muslim afterwards. He had no hesitation in enlisting Muslims also in his army.[50] A secret intelligence department was organised and the success of his operations[51] in the enemy country was in no small degree due to the efficiency of his spies, the chief among whom was the famous Bahirji Naik.[52] Shivaji the Great made up for his inferiority in numbers by the speed and mobility of his light-armed soldiers. He never allowed his soldiers to be encumbered with heavy arms or costly camp equipage and in this he had an advantage over the heavily armed Muslim soldiery. Dressed in tight-fitting breeches, cotton jackets, and turbans, carrying light weapons like swords, spears, lances, bows and arrows and matchlocks,[53] Shivaji's soldiers were ready to march at a moment's notice.[54] His bodyguards alone were richly dressed and possessed other distinguishing marks like silver rings on their weapons, thus making a brilliant sight when marching by the king's palanquin. Besides his regular arm[illegible]. Shivaji the Great could in time of emergency call the fe[illegible]is levies of the Maratha watandars. But he never depended up[illegible]es them, unlike the later Peshwas and probably discontinued this practice when his rule was firmly established. Another notable feature of his military system was that he never made any grants of jahagirs for military services; his soldiers were paid either in cash or by an assignment on the district governments. Their pay was never allowed to fall in arrears and when we consider that irregularity in payment of the soldier's salaries was responsible for a good deal of confusion in the Maratha state under the Peshwas and also of the insubordination of the mercenaries, we really marvel at the several wise rules that the Maratha king made and strictly enforced in his own times. It would be worth knowing why his wise and efficient system could not be continued *in toto* after his death and we shall do that in a later chapter. His strict punctuality in payment brought him another advantage; he had not to pay high salaries.[55] Conspicuous service in war was liberally rewarded;[56] wounded soldiers got a special allowance and widows and orphans of soldiers who fell in active service were adequately pensioned and the sons, if major, were taken in his service.

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[50] A body of seven hundred Pathan offered their services to the Maratha king and they were enlisted. This policy was opposed by a majority of his officers but an old officer Gomaji Naik Pansambal supported it.

[51] Cf. " This chief pays his spies liberally which has greatly helped his conquests by the correct information which they give him "—French Governor Martin in Indian Historical Records Commission, Proceedings of Meetings, Vol. VI, p. 25.

[52] On one occasion Bahirji's knowledge of unfrequented hill tracks saved his army from complete destruction.

[53] See—Rt. Hon. Lord Egarton of Falton M.A.—*A Description of Indian and Oriental Armour*—Chapter on arms and armours of the Marathas.

[54] G. Duff—*History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, pp. 181-182.

The "Grand Monarque's" foresight and capacity to take infinite pains even over the minutest details is further borne out by his military regulations. Surely a mere robber state cannot be based on such wise rules neither can it have a ruler of Shivaji the Great's ability, statemanship and extraordinary genius. Robbers do not need a state and since when have they begun to feel the necessity of making good regulations to govern it? Good and efficient administration can never be the aim of a robber state.

Describing Shivaji's camp the French Governor Martin remarks, "His camp is without any pomp and unembarrassed by baggage or women. There are only two tents in it but of thick simple stuff and very small one for himself and the other for his minister. Ordinarily there are three horses for every two men which contributes to the speed which he usually makes." [57]

A woman, a female slave, or a dancing girl was forbidden to be taken in the camp and so strict was the great captain's discipline and love of method that any breach of this rule was punished with death. How the smallest details of the army administration did not escape the ever-watchful eye of Shivaji the

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[55] For details of the pay of his soldiers refer to: Ranade—*Rise of the Maratha Power*, p. 123.

[56] After the destruction of Afzul Khan's army, Shivaji's soldiers received their usual rewards. This practice of rewarding meritorious services and maintaining the widows and orphans of the fallen soldiers was continued throughout the Peshwa period.

[57] See Indian Historical Records Commission—Proceedings of Meetings—Vol. VI, p. 25.

Great can be seen from the following summary of his regulations given by Sabhasad : " The army should come to contonments in the home dominions during the rainy season. There should be kept stored grains, fodder, medicines, houses for men and stables for horses thatched with grass. As soon as the Dasara was over the army should march out of their quarters. At the time of their departure, an inventory should be made of the belongings of all the men, great or small, in the army and they should start on the expedition. For eight months the forces should subsist (on their spoils) in the foreign territories. They should levy contribution. There should be no women, female slaves, or dancing girls in the army. He, who should keep them, should be beheaded. In enemy territories, women and children should not be captured. Males, if found, should be captured. Cows should not be taken. Bullocks should be requisitioned for transport purposes only. Brahmins should not be molested;[58] where contribution had been laid, a Brahmin should not be taken as surety. No one should commit adultery. For eight months they should be on expedition in foreign countries. On the way back to the barracks in the month of Vaishakh, the whole army should be searched at the frontier of the home dominions. The former inventory of the belongings should be produced. Whatever might be in excess, should be valued and deducted from the soldiers' salary. Things of very great value, if any, should be sent to the royal treasury. If anyone secretly kept (anything) and the Sardar came to know (of it) the Sardar should punish him. After the return of the army to their camp an account should be made and all the Sardars should come to see the Raja, with gold, jewels, clothes and other commodities. There all the accounts should be explained and the things should be delivered to His Majesty. If any surplus should be found due to the contingents it should be asked for in cash from His Majesty. Then they should return to the barracks. Saranjam should be given to the man who had worked hard in the late campaign. If anyone had been guilty of violating the rules or of cowardice an enquiry should be made and the truth ascertained from the consensus of many and the offender should be punished with dismissal. Investigation should be quickly made."[59]

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[58] And Fryer says they were tortured with red-hot pincers. Is not the doctor picturesque if nothing else?

This army code was not a set of rules meant only as an ornamentation of the Statute Book but was strictly followed.[60] One man, however, could not personally look to everything and in spite of the good intentions of the king and his spies who seldom failed to report all cases of violence or fraud, some cases occurred wherein the rules were broken.[61] But, for these exceptional cases we can hardly hold Shivaji the Great responsible; he had made every provision to detect such breaches[62] or punish them severely when brought to his notice and that is all there is unto it.

The Chhatrapati's anxiety for the welfare of his subjects and the good name of his soldiers may be easily proved from what he wrote in a circular that he issued to the Jumledars, Havaldars and Karkuns of the regiment encamped at Chiplun in 1676. The soldiers of the regiment gave great trouble to the people of the neighbourhood. This is what the remarkable king wrote in his circular to the officers on that occasion : " If grain, bread, grass, and vegetable were forcibly taken away from the peasant they would desert the locality. Some of them would die of starvation and your presence would be more unwelcome than that of the Mughals. Do not give the rayat the least trouble; you have no need to stray out of your camping places. Money has been given to you from the government treasury; whatever any soldier may want either grain or vegetable or fodder for the animals should be purchased from the market. Violence should not be offered to anyone on any account." He warns the officers to take special precaution against fire. Lest mice should drag the burning wicks and set fire to the hay stacks, soldiers were not to smoke or cook near them and the lamps were to be put out before they went to bed.

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[59] We have taken the translation from Dr. Sen's *Administrative System of the Marathas.*

[60] In his Tanjore campaign while the army was marching through Golkonda, Shivaji the Great had issued orders not to harass the people on the way. They were to purchase everything they wanted. Yet the people of Golkonda were molested and the king, Sabhasad tells us, awarded capital punishment to the offenders and thus made a few examples which had the desired effect.

[61] In contravention of his rules it appears from the preamble of a treaty that Shivaji's men had carried away a number of men, women, children and cattle from Portuguese territory—See Dr. Sen—*Historical Records at Goa*, p. 10. There were other instances as well, (*a*) A Maratha soldier attacked the Sabnis of his regiment with a naked sword—refer to the letter dated the 8th Sept. 1671 in Rajwade—*M. I. Sadhane*—Vol. VIII, p. 20. (*b*) On the 23rd July 1672 Shivaji wrote to Dattaji Pant Waknis that the soldiers molested the pilgrims of the chaphal fair—refer to Bhate—*Sajjangad and RAMDAS*, p. 122.

[62] He had numberless informers about his troops; so that if they kept back any money or goods from account he forced them to give them up—See Scott—*History of the Dekkan*, Vol. II, p. 55.

"If the haystacks were burnt the necessary hay could not be produced even if the Kunbis were decapitated and the Karkuns harassed. The horses would die of hunger and the cavalry would be ruined." So careful was the prudent king about the minutest particulars. Robber states never care about such things neither are they so meticulously scrupulous about the welfare of their subjects.

Organisation of the Navy

Shivaji's fleet consisted chiefly of Gallivats and Ghurabs[63] and other river crafts of various descriptions. According to Sabhasad there were two squadrons of 400 vessels—Ghurabs (gun-boats), Tarandes, Tarus, Gallivats, Shibads, Pagars. Each squadron was under the command of an Admiral, Daria Sarang, and a Mai Naik. There was another Admiral, Daulat Khan by name, but he was an officer distinct from the Daria Sarang.[64] The sailors were recruited from the sea-faring Hindus such as the Kolis, Bhandaris, Sanghars, Vaghars and the Angres in whom the many creeks of the Bombay coast had developed hereditary skill in naval fight, and other tribes of the Malabar coast. The sailors must have been given a distinct headgear the peculiar Koli hat.[65]

Shivaji's navy was a menace to the foreign traders. It not only harassed the indigenous sea-powers of the Konkan coast but also plundered the ships and possessions of the European powers, viz. the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the English. The king's sailors had on more than one occasion successfully attacked the Portuguese men-of-war and had successfully defended Khanderi island against the attack of the English and the Siddis of Janjira. In one or two encounters the Marathas carried off the English shibars and ghurabs and took some Englishmen, prisoners[66] but on the whole this "mosquito craft" was unsuccessful in naval battles fought with artillery. In sea-worthiness and gun-power Shivaji's navy was certainly inferior to that of the English and hence he had to trust to the superiority of numbers for success.[67] The President of the Surat Factory was of opinion that "one good English ship would destroy a hundred of them without running herself into great danger."[68]

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[63] For a description of the ghurabs and the gallivats of the Angria's fleet—See R. Orme, *Military Transactions* (2nd edition, Vol. I, pp. 408-409). Robert Orme tells us that in 1675 Shivaji's fleet consisted of 57 sail (15 grabs and 42 gallivats, all crowded with men). See *Historical Fragments, etc.*, p. 53. Fryer saw on his way to Kharepatan 30 small ships and vessels, the admiral wearing a white flag aloft—See *A New Account, etc.*, p. 145. Sirkar points out "that the English reports never put their number above 160 and usually at 60 only"—See *Shivaji and His Times*, p. 298. Thus there is a great difference as to the exact strength of the Maratha navy in the different accounts quoted above.

[64] See Rajwade, *M. I. Sadhane*, Vol. VIII, p. 27.

[65] At Malwan there is a statute of Shivaji the Great with the Koli hat on his head—See *Itihas Sangraha*—Sphut Lekh—p. 1.

In addition to the police work against the Siddis's pirate fleet, the Maratha navy was employed in taking possession of foreign vessels wrecked on Shivaji's coast and in collecting duties from trading ships.[69] Shivaji the Great had also a strong marcantile fleet that plied between his ports and the coast towns of Arabia. Dr. Sen remarks, "Unlike many of his contemporaries, the great Maratha had realised that a strong naval power without a strong mercantile navy was an impossibility."[70]

Other Features of the Administration of Shivaji the Great

There were no organised Educational and Judicial departments in Shivaji's times. Courts of Justice, elaborate rules of procedure or codes of law were entirely unknown to Maharashtra of those days; it had its simple primitive method of administering justice. The Village Panchayats, manned by amateur judges and sitting in the village temples or under a big tree used to hear civil suits and give commonsense justice, based on a knowledge of the village customs. In case there was no evidence, the simple Marathas invoked divine aid and the trial by ordeals prevailed. The criminal cases were heard in the first instance by the illiterate Patil but appeals both in the civil and criminal suits were heard by a Nyayadhish, a Brahmin well-versed in the Shastras. The Hazir Majalasis heard final appeals and was perhaps called more often under Shivaji and his immediate successors than under the Peshwas.

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[66] The prisoners in the Maratha hands included 20 English, French and Dutch, 28 Portuguese and 9 Lascars—(Orme Mss., p. 116).

[67] Orme—*Fragments, etc.*—pp. 77-78.

[68] (F. R. Surat, 86, 26 Nov.) quoted in Sarkar's *Shivaji and His Times*, p. 300.

[69] It was considered in those times the duty of the state to regulate prices of articles and it was done mainly by regulating export and import duties—Refer to Rajwade—*M. I. Sadhane*, Vol. VIII, p. 21-23.

[70] See *Administrative System of the Marathas*, p. 162.

As regards Education there were no regular schools and the ancient system was allowed to continue as a matter of course. Learned scholars attracted eager students from all parts of the country and their private schools were the only centres of culture. Shivaji the Great encouraged learning in an indirect manner. Ranade says, "Among the charities, the Dakshina system of encouraging learning found strong support with Shivaji. It was an old edition of our modern system of payment by results."[71] Grants in money or in land used to be made to famous scholars as also to physicians of note, irrespective of their caste or creed so that they should carry out their respective work in comparative ease and security. One of the duties of Pandit Rao was to test the merit of and assign a suitable inam to the deserving candidates.

Achievements of the "Grand Monarque"

In order to appreciate the achievements of Shivaji the Great we must understand his difficulties. To begin with, Shivaji had nothing but the very small Jahagir of Poona and Supa and to establish even a tolerably good kingdom he had to fight against his powerful neighbours, the kings of Golkonda and Bijapur, the Portuguese, the Siddis of Janjira and the mighty Mughal Emperor. It is owing to this initial difficulty which taxed his inventive brain to the fullest, that some of his methods appear to be somewhat questionable. But a moment's reflection will easily convince any unbiassed mind that his guerilla tactics, the "Ganimikava", which reached perfection in his masterly hands, were the only method of success for him. The several ethical objections that have been urged against his methods are nothing less than the malicious effusions and meaningless, outpourings of irresponsible arm-chair politicians or professors or moralists who have never cared to estimate the incalculable harm that failure would have meant for his cause. Once the noble ideal of Hindu Swarajya was formed, his methods lay in the logic of History. We propose later on to examine the arguments of these unsympathetic critics who presume, in their ignorance and arrogance, to judge the mighty man of action and to affect a superior moral tone towards him. In the meanwhile let us content ourselves here with noticing his achievements.

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[71] Ranade—*Rise of the Maratha Power,* p. 130.

During his short reign of thirty-five years he founded the nucleus of the future Maratha Empire, extending from the fort of Salher and the Godawari to the Toongbhadra in the south including Konkan, and from Toongbhadra to the river Kaveri including Kolar, Balapur, Vellore, Jinji, and their dependencies. Out of nothingness as it were he created an independent compact Hindu State and was acknowledged the most powerful native ruler south of river Tapti. Swarajya was thus established and it was his first achievement. His second achievement was the creation of a system of impregnable forts at strategic points for the protection of his kingdom and its commerce and the importance of these forts both for offensive and defensive warfare was amply demonstrated in his life-long struggle with the Mughals. The strong hill-forts were a natural barrier to the progress of any hostile army through his territory. Aurangzeb was soon to learn to his terrible cost what it meant to reduce these forts which Shivaji the Great had provided for the security of the Maratha State. Jinji alone, where Rajaram in his extremity set up his new government, stood the siege directed by one of the ablest generals Zulfikar-ali-Khan for some years. The National Maratha Army, the powerful weapon forged by the great king to free his country from bondage was his next achievement. The Marathas had been well known for their military prowess from time immemorial. More recently they had won fresh laurels under the celebrated Malik Ambar when the Mughal forces of the great Akbar had to beat an ignominious retreat before them. Considerably inferior to his enemies in numerical strength Shivaji the Great necessarily relied upon the quality of his troops. He enforced strict discipline in his army and throughout its brilliant career maintained a high level of military efficiency by appealing to the patriotism of his soldiers and by rousing their war-like instincts. The backbone of his army was the Mavlis, a race of hardly hillmen who were first organised by him and who clung to their beloved leader to the last with splendid courage and fidelity. The great Maratha captain trained the ill-clad and ill-fed hillmen into an excellent infantry and to these trusty troops which he meant for service in the hills, he added several regiments of Hetkaris of the Konkan for work in the plains, regular campaigns, and long marches. Selected after personal examination by the king himself and hammered into efficiency in the hard school of war[72] rather than by drill on the parade ground, his Mavlis and Hetkaris have rendered themselves famous in the military annals of India. Shivaji the Great knew everything about his national army, its needs and requirements. His inborn military genius instinctively adopted that system of warfare which was highly appropriate to the nature of the country, the weapons of the age, the aptitude of the Maratha soldier and the relative strength of himself and his enemies. His highly mobile light cavalry, reinforced by swift-footed infantry, was the marvel of his age and the despair of his enemies. Of short stature and light build, Shivaji's soldier was man to man inferior to the tall and stout Mughal. But his hardihood, courage, wonderful energy, presence of mind and the national spirit which animated him more than compensated for his physical inferiority. The guerilla tactics of the elusive Marathas so much demoralised their Muslim adversaries that at last they failed to meet them on equal terms even in the open field. Fryer points out the chief merits and demerits of the two rival armies; he says, "Seva Gi's men thereby being fitter for any martial exploit, have been accustomed to fare hard, journey fast and take little pleasure. But the other will miss of a booty rather than a dinner; must mount in state and have their arms carried before them and their women not far behind them, with the masters of mirth and jollity; will rather expect than pursue a foe; but then they stand it out better; for Seva Gi's men care not much for a pitched field, though they are good at surprising and ransacking; yet agree in this, that they are both of stirring spirit."[73] In spite of his defects the Maratha soldier was a fine fellow and all his exploits were performed under the leadership of his own countrymen and not under foreign officers as in later times. He made himself irresistible in the age of Aurangzeb and the credit of giving him the talisman of success goes to Shivaji the Great.

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[72] Cf. "Shivaji had no idea of allowing his soldiers' swords to rust"—Manucci, ed. Irvine, Vol. II, p. 203. Cf. Harmsworth.

Nor was this all; he was the father of the Maratha navy. His naval policy bore ample fruit and during the Peshwa period the Maratha traders actually settled in Arabian coast towns like Muscat and their trading vessels visited China. The naval tradition of Maharashtra was maintained after Shivaji the Great by the Angres till their fleet was foolishly destroyed by the combined efforts of the Peshwa and the English. Mrs. Steel says, "Indeed having in view the fact that he was the only person who managed in any way to harass the English fleets, it seems not unlikely that had he lived longer British Commerce would have been longer also in finding firm foothold in India."[74]

His civil and revenue reforms undertaken in the sole interests of the welfare of his subjects were another of his achievements.

Neither the nature of the country nor the character of its inhabitants was in favour of the establishment of an orderly government. Shivaji had to evolve order out of chaos. Before the rise of Shivaji, the country had been thrown into confusion by the invasion of the Mughals and even the neighbourhood of Poona had been depopulated. When Dadoji Kondadev took charge of the mavals, it was a territory of uncultivated fields and deserted homesteads. Blood feuds were the order of the day and plunder and rapine formed the normal state of things. Almost every watan had two or more claimants and they fought to the bitter end. In his blind fury the Maratha watandar felt no pity for his rival's widow or his orphan children. If the loyalty of an old adherent succeeded in rescuing a pregnant lady or an infant heir, the child was sure to be brought up in the traditions of the family hate and when grown up would try to avenge the wrongs of his family and of his dead relatives.[75] In this vendatta he would often seek the assistance of a powerful neighbour generally at the price of a portion of the disputed watan and this man would take up the quarrel as if it was his own.[76] The anarchy of this time has left its marks on the family papers of the old Deshmukhs and nowhere do we get a more terrible account of these family feuds in all their horror and bloodshed than in the papers of the Jagdales[77] of Masur and the Jedhe Deshmukhs of Rohidkhore. Some of these Deshmukhs like the Jagdales had to forget their pride and seek Shivaji's protection and patronage; others like Kanhoji Jedhe entered his service;[78] yet others like the humbled Khopres joined Afzalkhan against Shivaji;[79] but ultimately all were brought under his control. Such were the times in which Shivaji had to work.[80] Military service, as a source of honour and emolument, appealed more to Shivaji's officers than the peaceful silent work of civil service.[81] Had they been left to themselves they would have preferred a campaign of conquest to the work of consolidation. Shivaji was thus handicapped in his work of reorganisation and reform by the lack of imagination on the part of his subordinates and the weakness of the Maratha character for a military career.

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[73] Fryer—*A new Account, etc.*, p. 175.
[74] See Flora A. Steel—*India through the Ages*, p. 230.
[75] Rajwade—Vol. XV, pp. 110-111.

He never tried to achieve the impossible and unworkable ideals. He knew that without an orderly government there could be neither stability for the new state nor strict discipline in his army which was the mainstay of his kingdom. A strong government for Maharashtra was not to be thought of unless he united under his banner all the petty chiefs who exercised sovereign powers in the different parts of the country. He therefore decided to try conciliation first but when his attempts in that direction failed he did not for a single moment hesitate to take stronger measures against the turbulent Deshmukhs originally appointed to collect the revenue and who had gradually assumed sovereign authority and made their office hereditary. The question he had to decide was how far the old feudal system with its concomitant evils of private war, anarchy, and oppression should be allowed to continue. If he abolished totally the vicious feudalism of his times he would be alienating most of his countrymen but if he kept it intact, it would mean the negation of a strong monarchy. Thus the problem was a difficult one. As a practical statesman, however, he chose to have a compromise. The Maratha watandar, Shivaji the Great knew well, cared more for his land than for his country. The Deshmukhs and the Deshpandes were, therefore, to continue to enjoy their old rights and perquisites but the king appointed his own revenue officers. The rayats were also given to understand that henceforth they would have nothing to do with the Desais or the Deshmukhs. To render them totally harmless he further prohibited them to build any walled or bastioned castle and after the fashion of Henry II of England demolished some of their strongholds which were centres of their local tyranny. Where there were important forts the king posted his own garrison and thus nothing was left in the hands of these unruly Mirasdars. They were on no account to practise their old tyranny. In this manner Shivaji the Great tried to check the growth of feudalism and feudal anarchy.

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[76] See Rajwade—*Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhane,* Vol. XV, pp. 117-118.

[77] Rajwade—Vol. XV, pp. 110-111.

[78] Sardesai—*Marathi Riyasat,* Purwardha, pp. 173-174.

[79] Rajwade, Vol. XV, p. 364.

[80] Rajwade gives examples of such terrible vengeance and murders in his Vol. XV.

[81] Even Nilo Pant Mazumdar had earnestly prayed to be relieved of his civil duties that he might "render military service like other men and capture forts when necessary." Nor was he reconciled to his duties until Shivaji assured him that his services as a civil officer were as important as those of a commander and would be equally appreciated—Refer to Rajwade —Vol. VIII, pp. 8-9.

In spite of his vigilance, instances of tyranny and oppression occurred as we have seen but we must judge him, as Dr. Sen remarks,[82] by what he attempted and not what he achieved, although his achievements were by no means small, considering the basic social tendencies he had to fight. In some of his reforms he was indeed indebted to his predecessors both Hindu and Muslim. If Shivaji the Great cannot be said to be an original creator of a new system he had at least the practical sense and sagacity to modify and reform what he inherited. His administrative system practically continued unchanged till the death of Rajaram and the Peshwas with a few changes in the central government left it conveniently intact. With comparatively trifling changes it is, as Rawlinson says,[83] in force under the British Government today. Every administrative system has its roots in the past and Shivaji's system was not an exception. Even Akbar, one of the greatest rulers of India, owed so much to the genius of Sher Shah. Statesmanship does not necessarily mean originality. It is a statesman's business to fathom the needs of his times and adopt suitable measures to meet them, irrespective of their authorship. Shivaji the Great had the keen discernment of a statesman to appreciate the good points or the defects of the existing government. For example he knew that Malik Ambar's revenue system, with slight modifications, would suit his country best and he therefore unhesitatingly revived it. Our Muslim conquerors were not hostile to the indigenous institutions. In what country have the old institutions completely died out? Shivaji the Great perhaps borrowed the idea of Ashta Pradhans from Kautilya's Arthashastra, Mahabharat, Manu-Smirti, Shukraniti and other ancient works; Kautilya describes the duties of a Lekhaka (corresponding to Shivaji's Chitnis) and some of the Karkhanas have been mentioned in Shukraniti. So also in town planning, village communities and their duties, city police and Kotwal, land revenue and cesses, military and judicial systems he may have owed a good deal to these ancient works. The fact is the Maratha administrative institutions had been evolved from their ancient Hindu prototypes[84] and the part played by the Muslim rulers of India in this evolution was not insignificant. Dr. Sen[85] says, "Thus the survival of the old Hindu principles was due to the Muhammedans and the Marathas in their turn helped the survival of the Muhammedan forms and practices." There is a great similarity between the revenue principles of Shivaji the Great and those of Akbar.[86] Similarly Shivaji might have borrowed some of the military features of his systems from the Adilshahi code and from the Mughals, e.g. the method of enlistment, payment, mulukhgiri, rewards for military services, branding of horses, pensions, the duties of Kotwal, the Karkhanas, etc., etc.[87] The basis was Hindu but the superstructure possessed several Muslim characteristics. Thus Shivaji the Great borrowed from his predecessors where borrowing could be done with advantage but he was certainly not a blind imitator. He enforced strict method where formerly there was none. Like Napoleon, the slightest irregularity did not escape his personal attention. On one occasion he frames regulations about the proper style of official letters; on another he seeks to provide for the punctual payment of masons. He invites the attention of his cavalry officers to the careless use of fire in the camp. He argues with them about the necessity of storing hay and fodder for their animals in time. To the governor of a port he issues instructions for regulating the prices of salt and nuts. He harangues his soldiers about their duties and responsibilities. And simultaneously with these he initiates a literary movement of a far-reaching character by causing the Rajvyavahar Kosh to be compiled. Such were the diverse topics in which the king's wonderful mind found a relaxation from the perpetual tension of an uncertain and perilous warfare. But the imperishable achievement of his life and his most precious legacy was the Maratha Nation that he created out of the warring elements and the new spirit that he breathed into his people. He gathered the scattered fragments of the Maratha Power in his strong and masterly hands and inspired the Marathas with new ideals of National Independence and a Hindu Empire. He taught them by his personal example to strive after national glory rather than personal gain and taught them also the methods of achieving it. In the War of Independence that followed his death, his Nation conducted itself with rare fortitude, vigour, and manliness and by its ultimate triumph against its determined foe, the incorrigible Aurangzeb, covered itself and its founder with eternal glory. Within nine years of his death his kingdom was lost; the wise rules of his government were scattered to the winds by his successors and feudalism with its fatal tendencies returned; offices became hereditary, rayats began to be oppressed and wisdom, vigour, vigilance, and foresight deserted the Maratha State for ever. In a thousand ways the historical tendencies and forces working within the decadent Hindu Society, which, for a brief while, had been held in check by his iron will, returned to the Maratha State in their naked ugliness, destroying all his cherished institutions. Even the Maratha State no longer exists; the very words "Maratha Nation" and "Maharashtra Dharma" have become things of the past. But for generations after his death, the memory of his achievements, the dazzling success of his ideas, remained and continued to water and fertilise the Maratha minds with new aspirations, new ideals, till at last his spirit blossomed forth once again into an all-India Hindu Empire and to this day it has not ceased to exist. The memory of his achievements is still green in our minds and his Spirit still inspires us with newer aspirations, newer ideals and beckons us to yet greater efforts in the cause of the national Independence. The "Marathaism" of Shivaji the Great never dies; it is an eternal verity.

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[82] *Administrative System of the Marathas*, p. 155.

[83] *Shivaji the Maratha*, p. 94.

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[84] For a fuller account of this evolution refer to Dr. Sen—*Administrative System of the Marathas,* pp. 485-590.

[85] *Administrative System of the Marathas,* p. 595.

[86] Sarkar—Studies in Mughal India & Aurangzeb, Vol. I, pp. 191-196.

[87] A detailed discussion of this question will be found in Dr. Sen's *Administrative System of the Marathas,* pp. 632-664. See also Sarkar's *Mughal Administration,* pp. 94-95.

We only add the testimony of Sir Jadunath Sircar for it has, as coming from a non-Maratha critic of Shivaji the Great, special significance. Whatever may be the sins of the government under the later Peshwas and we must admit they were many—the achievements of the Maratha Hero are so outstanding that in spite of what he wrote in the previous pages of his *Shivaji and His Times*, they have evoked genuine enthusiasm in the Bengali Historian and have exacted his share of the tribute in the following words : "I regard him as the last great constructive genius and nation-builder[88] that the Hindu race has produced. His system was his own creation and unlike Ranjit Singh, he took no foreign aid in his administration. His army was drilled and commanded by his own people and not by Frenchmen. Shivaji was illiterate; he learnt nothing by reading. He built up his kingdom and government before visiting any royal court, civilised city, or organised camp. He received no help or counsel from any experienced minister or general.[89] But his native genius, alone and unaided, enabled him to found a compact kingdom, an invincible army, and a grand and beneficent system of administration.

Before his rise, the Maratha race was scattered like atoms through many Deccan kingdoms. He welded them into a mighty nation. And he achieved this in the teeth of the opposition of four mighty powers like the Mughal empire, Bijapur, Portuguese India and the Abyssinians of Janjira. No other Hindu has shown such capacity in modern times. Before he came, the Marathas were mere hirelings, mere servants or allies. They served the state but had no lot or part in its management; they shed their life blood in the army but were denied any share in the conduct of war or peace. They were always subordinate, never leaders.

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[88] I wonder why Sir J. Sircar is so pessimistic about the future nation-builders. Surely he cannot mean that Hindus will not produce new men with equal constructive genius if not more.

[89] His early tutor, Dadoji Kondadev was a Brahmin well-versed in the Shastras and revenue management. He was incapable of inspiring his civil and military institutions.

Shivaji was the first to challenge Bijapur and Delhi and thus teach his countrymen that it was possible for them to be independent leaders in war. Then he founded a state and taught his people that they were capable of administering a kingdom in all its departments. He has proved by his example that the Hindu race can build a nation, found a state, defeat armies; they can conduct their own defence; they can protect and promote literature and art, commerce and industry; they can maintain navies and ocean-trading fleets of their own and conduct naval battles on equal terms with foreigners. He taught modern Hindus to rise to the full stature of their growth. He has proved that the Hindu race can still produce not only jamaitdars (non-commissioned officers) and chitnises (clerks) but also rulers of men and even a king of kings (chhatrapati). Shivaji has shown that the tree of Hinduism is not really dead, that it can rise from beneath the seemingly crushing load of centuries of political bondage, that it can put forth new leaves and branches; it can again lift up its head to the skies."[90]

Was Shivaji the Great a Rebel?

In the eyes of Muslim Historians like Khafi Khan and the Bijapur Darbar, Shivaji was a rebel. In one of his letters his brother Venkoji tauntingly calls him a rebel. Some of his own selfish countrymen who were vassals of Bijapur regarded him as a mere rebel and the Surat Factory records described him as "Rebel Sevagy."[91] Some of the modern English Historians are tempted to speak of the Great king as if he was a rebel. We must therefore examine this question somewhat at length specially because such an examination enables us to appreciate his many achievements in a correct perspective.

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[90] *Shivaji and His Times*, pp. 441-444.
[91] Factory Records, Surat, 1665-67, pp. 175-176.

From a strictly legal point of view Shivaji the Great was indeed a rebel. He was the son of a vassal Jahagirdar of the Bijapur State and hence legally speaking his status was that of a rebel till his complete success brought its own reward. If he had failed to assert his independence he would have been no doubt shot as a rebel. Shivaji's was not the only example of a successful rebel being recognised as the legitimate head of the government soon after his achievements. Washington, a rebel to begin with, lived long enough to become thrice the President of the United States of America. Mr. De Valera was a rebel and was on the point of being hanged but soon he was the constitutional President of the Irish Free State which his rebellion had brought into existence. *De facto* sovereignty tends to become *de jure* sovereignity in the long run if it is sufficiently strong to assert itself. This was one of the facts which induced him to get himself crowned in a regular manner later on when he had comparative peace and security. But this question has another side and we must see what his position was from the higher principle of Moral Law.

To the Hindus of those days in general and the Marathas in particular, the Muslim state was the state of a foreigner. To them the Muslim kingship was the rule of an alien religion, which had no other sanction behind it than the superior physical force of a conqueror. Whatever may be our opinion as to the nature of Muslim rule in India, however much we may differ from them, it was a fact that the Hindus of the 17th century regarded the Muslims in no other light. Their belief, however mistaken, was a fundamental fact for them.

Now under the foreign rule, self-development individually and as a nation is stifled. Mr. Jacques Novikow says, "Political servitude develops the greatest defects in the subjugated peoples."[92] Terence Macswiney says, "It is of vital importance to himself and the community that a man be given a full opportunity to develop his powers of soul and body and to fill his place worthily. In a free state he is in the natural environment for full development. In an enslaved state it is the reverse. When one country holds another in subjection that other suffers morally and materially. It suffers materially being a prey for plunder. It suffers morally because of the corrupt influences the bigger nation sets to work to maintain its ascendency. Because of this moral corruption, national subjection should be resisted uncompromisingly as a state fostering vice."[93] Emerson writes, "If peace is sought to be justified or preserved for the safety of the luxurious or the timid it is a sham and the peace will be broken."[94] Thus for Shivaji the Great and his comrades the War of Independence was inevitable, nay it was a duty for they firmly believed that they were waging it to establish Swarajya and for the protection of their Dharma. It was not "merely for the sake of gain" that Shivaji the Great "inflicted untold misery on hundreds of thousands of innocent people, Hindus and Mohamedans alike,"[95] as Vincent Smith alleges. The Maratha hero had to shed blood and he did it not gleefully or wantonly but as a terrible necessity. Terence Macswiney truly remarks, "There are moral horrors worse than any physical horror because freedom must be had at any cost of suffering; the soul is greater than the body. If hesitating to undertake it means the overthrow of liberty already possessed or the lying passive in slavery already accomplished, then it is the duty of every man to fight if he is standing or revolt if he is down. And he must make no peace till freedom is assured for the moral plague that eats up a people whose independence is lost, is more calamitous than any physical rending of limb from the body. The body is a passing phase; the spirit is immortal; and the degradation of that immortal part of man is the great tragedy of life. Viciousness, cowardice, intolerance—every bad thing arises like a weed in the night and blights the land where freedom is dead and those who set more count by the physical consequences cannot by that avert them for the moral disease is followed by physical wreck—if delayed still inevitable."[96] This is the explanation of that "untold misery" to which Mr. Smith refers. Then again if "untold misery" had perforce to be inflicted on the innocent, Shivaji the Great by his benevolent rule brought untold happiness and plenty, not to hundreds of thousands but to millions of billions of his oppressed countrymen. The "untold misery" was the inevitable and unpreventible result of that glorious war of independence which was an expression of the moral force. It is therefore quite clear that to defend or to recover freedom men must be always ready, in spite of the "untold misery" of innocent people, for an appeal to arms. It is a principle that has been vindicated through all history. A mere proving of truth is not enough to make the tyrannical power see the justice of a people's claim to liberty. Let alone claims of Maratha liberty, Aurangzeb did not see Shivaji the Great as worthy of even a higher rank than a panch-hazari. Men in authority like Aurangzeb are never moved by argument; the only thing that they understand is "ferro et igni" (Blood and Iron) of Bismarck.

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[92] *War and its Alleged Benefits*—p. 79.

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[93] *Principles of Freedom*, p. 3.
[94] *Essay on War*, p. 10.
[95] *Oxford History of India*—p. 436.
[96] *Principles of Freedom*—p. 24-26.

What is the ethics of a national revolt? It was because his Maratha contemporaries were ignorant of the philosophy of resistance in arms that they regarded Shivaji the Great as a rebel who did not deserve even their sympathy. They only thought of the constituted authority and the law of the land against which he "rebelled." Such timid men who pay homage to any and every sort of law deserve our contempt for they are the product of the very conditions of slavery against which a bolder and a finer spirit, like Shivaji the Great, feels called upon to fight.

"A human law bears the character of Law so far as it is in conformity with right reason and in that point of view it is manifestly derived from the Eternal Law."[97]

St. Thomas says of unjust laws: "such proceedings are rather acts of violence than laws."[98]

"The fundamental idea of all law," as Balmez put it, "is that it be in accordance with reason, that it be an emanative from reason, an application of reason to society."[99] St. Thomas remarks, "The kingdom is not made for the king but the king for the kingdom," and from this, the natural inference is," that all Governments have been established for the good of society and that this alone should be the compass to guide those who are in command whatever the form of Government."

Mill in his "Representative Government" propounds likewise the view that the well-being of the governed is the sole object of

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[97] Aquinas Ethicus, Vol. I, p. 276.
[98] *Ibid*, p. 292.
[99] Balmez—*European Civilization*, Chapter 53.

Government. It was the view of our ancient political writers and also of Plato, the Greek philosopher.[1]

"Political Government can be legitimately constructed only on condition of the acknowledgement of natural obligations and rights as inviolable."[2]

Here all schools of thought of all times are in agreement.

Dr. Murray discusses an extreme case of resistance to an established and legitimate Government which abuses its power and remarks: "the common opinion of a large number of our Theologians then is that it is lawful to resist by force and if necessary to depose the sovereign ruler."[3]

To the conception that kings held their power immediately from "God," Suarez boldly opposed the thesis of the initial sovereignity of the people, from whose consent, therefore, all civil authority immediately sprang. So also, in opposition to Inelanchton's theory of Governmental ommipotence Suarez *a fortiori* admitted the right of the people to depose those princes who would have shown themselves unworthy of the trust reposed in them.[4]

The prince has that power of law-giving which the people have given him.[5]

Sir James Mackintosh says that obedience to authority even though illegitimate is not the only duty without an exception. "An insurrection rendered necessary by oppression and warranted by a reasonable probability of a happy termination is an act of public virtue."[6] Advocates of blind submission to any power will therefore do well to remember the emphatic reply of Balmez, "Illegitimate authority is no authority at all. The conqueror who, by mere force of arms, has subdued a nation, does not thereby acquire a right to its possession; the Government which by gross inequalities has despoiled entire classes of citizens, exacted undue contributions, abolished legitimate rights, cannot justify its acts by the simple fact of its having sufficient strength to execute these inequalities."

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[1] Plato's Republic—Bk IV.

[2] CALDERWOOD—Handbook of Modern Philosophy, Applied Ethics—sec. 4.

[3] Essays chiefly theological, Vol. IV. See also Rickaby—Moral Philosophy—Chapter 8, Sec. 7.

[4] De Wulf—*History of Medieval Philosophy*—p. 495 (3rd edition).

[5] Hallam—*Literature of Europe*, Vol. 3, Chapter IV.

[6] Quoted by Dr. Murray in his essay on "Restana is the Supreme Civil Power".

So much for *De Facto* Government. It will now, we hope, be clear why Shivaji the Great refused to yield allegiance to the Muslim powers of India of his day. To him as to every Hindu of that period, their Governments were nothing but usurpations, based as they were on naked force. The liberator of the Maratha race was not deficient in moral fibre or respect for authority; indeed he valued discipline so highly. But he refused to recognise the Muslim authority in India as legitimate and to rebel against it was an act of public virtue—an act too which had the full support of the public opinion of his times. Morally therefore Shivaji must be looked upon not as a rebel but as a civilised belligerent. If the Christian Subjects of the Sublime Porte, viz. the Greeks, could be recognised by Canning as belligerents, not rebels, and if subsequent historians have ratified his verdict, how could different principles be applied to an identical case? How then can Shivaji be justly called a "Rebel"?

Why the Institutions of Shivaji the Great were not permanent

Thus was the Maratha State brought into existence. It was a prodigious child indeed—prodigious because its spiritual father was superlatively great. Yet it was a child with its whole period of infancy before it, of dangers and trials. Why so many of his institutions failed to survive him is a question of the greatest importance to this thesis and for that we must examine his social environment. We have deliberately relegated this discussion to the last chapter wherein we shall endeavour to point out the reason why that was so and also how it was impossible for any human being to foresee what organic reforms were necessary to make his system enduring. The necessity obviously did not arise at any rate for the great King. Shivaji the Great, to us, is as nearly a perfect man, both in private and public conduct, as any mortal can possibly be perfect.

Hence we do not for a single moment blame him for having failed to provide for the continuance of his reforms by undertaking radical and wholesale reform of the Hindu social system. It was impossible for him to foresee the need for such a reform.

In the meanwhile our task in the succeeding chapters will be to notice the historical circumstances which made a serious deviation from his system possible and even to a certain extent necessary, what the changes made were and how they contributed to the decay and decline of the Maratha Empire. Finally we must also discuss the question whether the Marathas would have successfully withstood the attack on their Empire from an organised Western Power, granting it was possible to continue intact Shivaji's administrative system. Our advance answer to the querry is emphatically in the negative.

Even if Jahagirdari system had not been re-introduced in the Maratha polity, there would have still remained the question of the succession to the throne. Shivaji the Great could not make any constitutional provision for it. The personal jealousies and pursuit of individual interests and such other problems of human nature would have remained for his successors. All remedies would have been temporary in their character so long as the Maratha Society and its environment remained stationary and non-progressive; so long as the Hindus did not substitute rational, conscious, purposive activity for traditions and customs; so long as the social motive force to effect changes in the Hindu social organisation to suit the changing circumstances was absent; so long would it have been impossible for them to repel the attack of the western civilization. Under their backward social conditions they were bound to be conquered sooner or later. Perhaps if every successor of Shivaji the Great had been as practical, as virtuous, and as able as he was, the Marathas, let us take for granted, might have retained their Empire. But who can guarantee such a consummation? Shivajis are a rare phenomena while Sambhajis, Ram Rajas, Raghobas and Baji Raos (II) are common enough.

CHAPTER V

THE RE-BIRTH OF THE MARATHA STATE

AFTER the death of Shivaji the Great the Maratha State had to struggle for its existence against the Grand Army of the Emperor Aurangzeb whose determination to bring the whole Deccan under his sway had a profound influence on the course of the internal and external history of the Maratha People. On the one hand, the Marathas, in spite of initial reverses, wonderfully rallied round their capable civil and military leaders and not only reestablished their conquered State but also in Shahu's reign made a beginning of the future Maratha Empire. We must therefore fix our attention on this interesting phenomenon of the external manifestation of the Maratha polity. On the other hand we see the gradual destruction of the excellent governmental system, bequeathed to them by their wise king, and the decline of the order and regularity of the Maratha Government which had been its strong point under Shivaji the Great.

New principles, more selfish than patriotic, more personal than public, took the place of the former salutary rules and side by side with the growth of the empire, got an increasing control over the administrative machinery. The national spirit which Shivaji the Great had kindled in his people, however, continued to hearten the Marathas under misfortunes and the memory of his great example and achievements together with the teachings of Ramdas saved them from immediate and complete ruin. The flame of patriotism burned now dimly, now with brightness, until finally the Maratha People emerged triumphant from the great crisis. The Grand Army of the Emperor, now on the verge of his grave, retreated from the Maratha kingdom, beaten, broken and pursued by the exultant Maratha soldiers. Shivaji's ideal of "Hindavi Swarajya" received a new orientation at the hands of his successors like Baji Rao I and the idea of a Hindu-Pad-Padashahi, revitalised the Maratha national energy. The face of the Maratha armies was turned towards Delhi and the hegemony of the Marathas was established over the Indian continent though their imperial ambitions received a temporary check at Panipat.

Thus while the empire was reaching its zenith in splendour and power, its vital forces were deteriorating side by side. The binding force of the national ideal of a Hindu empire became looser and looser and selfish designs asserted complete ascendency in the counsels of the Marathas. The character of the Maratha soldiers as well as generals progressively degenerated; intrigues supplanted real statesmanship; the economic condition of the masses gradually worsened and as the Maratha society travelled further and further from the glorious times of Shivaji the Great, there was less and less of his patriotic spirit and more and more of decay and decline. The vigorous tone of the Maratha society and government yielded precedence to domestic squabbles, internal anarchy, and external weakness. The Maratha society all these days had not progressed so as to keep pace with its territorial expansion, with the inevitable result that the spectacular yet internally rotten empire was in a condition of being dissolved and absorbed. And this was effected by the representatives of the organised English nation. The Maratha Empire, carrying the germs of decay in its bosom almost since its birth, was thus finally broken. We shall have occasion in the following pages to notice all the sins of omission and commission of the Marathas and in the last chapter we shall analyse the causes of their decay and decline. We shall endeavour to explain whence arose the weakness of the Maratha People. We now turn to the internal history of the Maratha State.

Sambhaji asserts his claim to the throne

The death of Shivaji the Great precipitated the second great crisis in the history of the Maratha People. The first crisis was when he surrendered to Jaisingh and was later on imprisoned by Aurangzeb. Shivaji the Great was fully aware of the Emperor's designs on the Deccan and after skillfully extricating himself from the most dangerous situation in which he was caught, he devoted his last years to place his kingdom in a condition to meet this menace from the North. He forgot his quarrels with the neighbour states of Bijapur and Golkonda and sent them the much needed help against the Mughals. These in return agreed to pay him tribute for his services and entered into offensive and defensive alliances with him. A new line of defence was also formed in Southern India to which he could repair in case of necessity. The hill forts of Maharashtra were kept in a state of repair, fully prepared for war and the navy was kept ready for any eventuality. But above all he relied for the defence of the Maratha State upon the spirit he had roused in his people and the faith in the cause of freedom which he had inspired in all classes. The succession to the throne only remained to be regulated. Even if he had done so we doubt whether he would have succeeded in making any suitable arrangement. Sambhaji, we think, would have in any case asserted his right to the throne because in personal bravery, courage and dash there was none among his contemporaries to equal him, at any rate in these early days of his reign.

Disobeying his father's orders Sambhaji had gone over to the Mughals and on his return had been kept under surveillance at Panhala.[1] The artful Soyarabai,[2] Rajaram's mother, and her faction headed by Annaji Datto, the sachiv, took advantage of casual utterances of the great king in regard to the misconduct of Sambhaji and its evil consequences for the Maratha kingdom as well as Sambhaji's absence from the capital [3] and urged upon the Pradhans the desirability of setting aside the claims of the eldest son and of administering the government under a regency in the name of the second son, Rajaram. The ministers knew that Sambhaji, by his character and habits, was unfit to continue his father's task. Moro Pingle the Peshwa in spite of his rivalry with Annaji was drawn into this plan and the other Pradhans acquiescing, steps were immediately taken to carry it into effect.[4]

Accordingly Rajaram was placed on the throne and the ministers began to transact business in his name. This arrangement was also the first attempt on the part of the Maratha statesmen to set up a government to suit the circumstances and reasons of State. It was a measure which took the merits of the case into consideration rather than the mere principle of primogeniture and legitimacy and as such it would have introduced a healthy principle in the governmental system, had it succeeded. But Soyarabai's party was not strong; several of its members were undecided[5] and the people and specially the army had not been taken into their confidence and as the common Maratha understood more readily the principle of legitimacy than reasons of state, the plot failed. The backward Maratha society as a whole was not prepared to base political measures, however well-advised, on the salutary principle of reason and its dictates. That is why we hold that even Shivaji's arrangement, had there been any, would not have succeeded.

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[1] *M. Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 539.

[2] For Shivaji's wives and children, see *Itihas Sangraha*, Vol. 8.

[3] *M. Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 541.

[4] Balaji Avji Chitnis who was favourably disposed towards Sambhaji from the beginning did not approve of the plot and refused to write the letters advising Sambhaji's arrest. These letters on the secretary's suggestion were written by his son. See Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 542.

Shivaji's death had been kept a profound secret[6] but Sambhaji got wind[7] of the conspiracy and showing commendable dash, took prompt and vigorous measures to assert his authority. The garrison of Panhalla went over to him; Hambirrao Mohite, the Senapati, advanced and paid his respects and even the jealous Peshwa, instead of exerting himself to make the common policy a success, offered his services to Sambhaji. One by one the armies under different commanders came over to his side and Sambhaji entered Raigad without any opposition in June 1680.

The unexpected vigour, method, and even prudence of his early conduct created a favourable impression on the minds of his countrymen and high hopes of a strong government led by a worthy son of Shivaji were raised. The address and energy which he showed on this occasion would have wiped out all recollection of his early faults and these would have been forgiven as youthful indiscretions. But the inherent violence of his temper soon got the better of wise policy and the barbarities he committed after his accession lost him his subjects' sympathy. He put his step-mother to a painful and lingering death; put Rajaram into confinement; threw Annaji Datto into irons and confiscated his property; and beheaded other officers of the Soyarabai party. The last spark of opposition to his interest being thus extinguished with blood, Sambhaji sat on the throne about the 28th of July 1680.[8] Some time afterwards, Aurangzeb's fourth son, Prince Akbar, having been won over by the Rajputs, rebelled against his father and sought asylum with the Maratha king. A fresh conspiracy was formed by the restless party of Annaji Datto, and overtures were made to Prince Akbar in favour of Rajaram. No sooner did Sambhaji get the news than he proceeded to wreak his vengeance on the most famous personages of his father's times and of whose help and guidance he was now in dire need against his formidable enemies, the Mughals. Ballaji Avji Chitnis, the Prabhu, who had been the right-hand man of Shivaji, together with his eldest son and a relative Shamji Avji, Hiraji Farjand, such of the Shirkeys as could be arrested and lastly Annaji Datto himself, the able sachiv of the Great King were got trampled to death by elephants. The principal members [9] of the Shirkey family fled in terror for their lives and several of them entered the Mughal service. Thus the impious cruelties of the king and his impolitic and inordinately disproportionate punishments began to spread confusion and anarchy in the once orderly Maratha state. The hearts of his subjects were alienated from him and the disaffection produced towards the languishing government by his executions was heightened by other measures equally foolish. The able ministers of his father who had been the pillars of the Maratha state were neglected and presecuted [10] and the responsibilities and cares of the state, rendered in every way more onerous by the watchful Aurangzeb, were entrusted to the effeminate and inefficient hands of a Kanoja Brahmin, named Kaloosha.[11] Even the attempts of Ramdas Swami,[12] the friend and spiritual Guru of his father, and of Raghunath Narayan Hanmante, a distinguished officer of the Maratha State, trained under Shivaji, to rouse him to a sense of duty were of no avail. Sambhaji, though civil to these personages, promised only to release Moro Pant Pingle and Janardan Pant and though they were released the worthless Kaloosha continued to have a complete mastery over his mind by encouraging his vices as well as by his insinuating manners and superficial accomplishments. Sambhaji abandoned himself more and more to drunkenness and debauchery and the affairs of the Maratha State were grossly neglected. The system of Shivaji the Great which depended for its efficiency on the vigilance and care of the executive power, soon fell into decay. The discipline of the army was gone and the strict army regulations were never followed. Women, though prohibited on pain of capital punishment, as well as stragglers were again permitted in the army; the revenue receipts in spite of nominal increase in the assessment gradually diminished; the farming system came into use to the great sufferings of the rayats and regular payment to the soldiers ceased. Instead they were allowed to keep a portion of the plunder to themselves. Thus, even before the invasion of Aurangzeb the Maratha kingdom, due to this internal and inherent causes, was threatened with speedy ruin.

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[5] *M. Riyasat*, p. 543.

[6] *M. Riyasat*, p. 548.

[7] Grant Duff says Sambhaji captured the letters but Mr. Sardesai says that the letters reached the hands of those to whom they were addressed. *Marathi Riyasat*, p. 542.

[8] The formal coronation was performed with full pomp and splendour in Feb. 1681. Sarkar: *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. IV, p. 243.

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[9] The whole clan of the Shirkes was proscribed. So many of them were tracked down and killed by Sambhaji that the word "Shirkan" (massacre of the Shirkes) still survives in the Marathi language. See Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 547.

[10] Moro Pingle, the Peshwa was imprisoned—See 1834 Bharat I. S. Mandal 60.

[11] Kalusha came to Deccan along with Sambhaji with the latter after his escape from Aurangzeb's hands and staying at Allahabad left that place for his native place. See Eliot and Dawson, Vol. VII, p. 305. But Sarkar says that he arrived at Raigad before Sambhaji's grand coronation—Vol. IV, p. 253. He was well versed in theology and popularly believed to be a master necromancer.

[12] Ramdas wrote a letter giving valuable advice to Sambhaji and holding a high ideal before him—See Ramadascharitra. It has been fully translated by Kincaid and Parasnis: *History of the Maratha People*, pp. 117-118. Hanmante boldly recounted his sins in an open darbar—Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 553. Kincaid & Parasnis, p. 140.

During the rapid progress of the Mughal arms, the indecision of Sambhaji's character, which was a marked trait towards the end of his career, rendered him inactive. A slave to drunken debauchery he became incapable of any sustained effort and it is to be regretted the promise of his early days remained to the last unrealised. He became day by day more superstitious and under the advice of his favourite Kabaji came to believe in witchcraft and demon worship.[13] He could still be moved to temporary activity but to many of the officers of his illustrious father, who were qualified to assist in this crisis, he was inaccessible except with the permission of the incompetent Kabaji.[14] The whole power was in effect concentrated in the hands of his favourite adviser but the latter was more occupied in managing his master's humours[15] than in attending to the important business of the state. Sambhaji was content to spend his time between Panhalla and Vishalgad or at a favourite house at Sangameshwar. In this state of imbecility the leaderless Maratha Nation was unable to cope with Aurangzeb's mighty army. Had it not been for the people's vitality which Shivaji the Great had so wisely built up the Emperor's dream of the conquest of the Deccan would have easily come out true. The Emperor was indeed so far successful as to capture the pleasure-loving Maratha King.

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[13] Ranade: *Rise of the Maratha Power*, p. 176.

[14] It is commonly believed that Sambhaji discontinued the offices of Asta Pradhans and gave all the posts to Kalusha but it is not true. He did not change the system. The ministers were there, but were powerless. Bharat I. S. Mandals Varshik Ahval & Itivrittas 1836-15 & Rajwade's Vol. VIII-40, Vol. XV-342. See also Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, pp. 559, 560-563.

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[15] Sarkar does not agree with this view. He says " Kavi Kulesh could not have been ' the minister of Sambhaji's pleasure ' as Orme calls him because Shambhu had already learnt to outrage women in his father's life-time. . . . Nor can the failure of Sambhaji's reign, compared with the glorious success of Shivaji's reign, be attributed to this minister because Moro Pant himself had been unable to induce his master to achieve anything great. . . . It is therefore historically untrue to make Kavi-Kulesh the scapegoat for Sambhaji's sins. His unpopularity with the Maratha ministers of the time (and therefore with the Maratha historians ever after) was solely due to the fact that he gained the royal favour and they could not. Could he have possibly reformed a character on which Ramdas's teachings produced no effect? " See Footnote to p. 254 Vol. IV.

This short paragraph is another of those examples which clearly point out the fact that in his writings about Marathas and Maratha Historians Sarkar seems to have taken leave of his Logic. His writings in that behalf are full of contradictions. Probably his love of his Hero, Aurangzeb, and the excessive labour he has spent on his history, have made him too partial to the Mughals. The question is, did Kavi-Kulesh, " the new Sejanus ", pander to Sambhaji's views or did he not? Must not this worthless favourite of the Maratha king share the responsibility of the failure of his reign? Sarkar himself writes (Vol. IV, p. 254), " But he was a foreign Brahmin and his administration ended in Sambhaji's ruin and the fall of the Maratha kingdom." Then again Sarkar says, " He soon made his way into the Raja's heart and gradually monopolised his trust and the supreme control of administration, while Sambhaji rapidly became a fainéant king, blindly following the minister's advice and devoting all his time to wine and woman with fitful outbursts of martial valour " (pp. 253-254). It is granted that Sambhaji was inclined to vicious activity but was not the favourite's duty to try at least to reform him. What use did Kavi-Kulesh make of the monopoly of power and implicit faith that his foolish master had put in him? Moro Pant never had this royal favour and hence had not this opportunity or at least he would have done his duty like Ramdas and Hanmante to rouse his master. It is another thing if Sambhaji could not have been reformed. If Sambhaji blindly followed his advice how was it that his administration brought ruin to his master and disaster to the Maratha kingdom? Was it not by his incompetence? Another question is how he came to possess so much influence with Sambhaji if not by pandering to his vices? How otherwise could he possibly have retained his capricious master's favour to the last? No achievement is on record in his favour. It is not enough that he did not appoint his own men to offices or that he was devoted to Sambhaji. Devotion to his master's person (not to his country's cause) must have proceeded from kindred spirit or from cunning calculation or both. Any able or spirited man in his position could have achieved great things for his royal master but what were the achievements of Kavi-Kulesh? His unpopularity with the Maratha ministers of the time may have been partially due to jealousy but why should modern Maratha historians not give the devil his due? If he had rendered any service to their country Maratha historians would have been glad to recognise his claim. He was an incapable servant of an equally incapable master and hence his devotion to him. Perhaps because the Marathas were the enemies of the contemporary Muslim historians, Maratha historians are unpopular with Sarkar, who has read and digested these Muslim writers.

One day while Tukubub Khan[16] was ordered with his detachment into the district of Kolhapur, he received intelligence that Sambhaji was just then whiling away his time at Sangameshwar[17] entirely off his guard. Ikhlas Khan, the enterprising general's son, dashed on at the head of a small party and imprisoned Sambhaji and Kalusha.[18] (Dec. 1688).[19] When the scouts brought to the king the news that a body of Mughal horse was approaching at full speed, the only answer Sambhaji, who was sleeping off the previous night's debauch, was capable of giving was that Kalusha was a magician and he would by his magic destroy the enemy.[20] No effort was made to rescue them; Kalusha's measures, added to the king's misconduct, had made them both odious to the Maratha people and the disorganised army was not in a position to undertake an enterprise in their favour, even if it was inclined to go in for any. When the prisoners arrived in the neighbourhood of the imperial camp, they were bound and led through the camp on camels. The procession passed through an innumerable multitude of both sexes who had flocked to have a look at their dreaded enemy. No indignity was spared to humiliate the fallen Maratha King. Aurangzeb probably intended to spare the royal prisoner as an instrument for inducing his troops to surrender the forts. But Sambhaji, now roused to a sense of his degradation and stung with shame and remorse, recovered his natural courage and deliberately courted death. When, therefore, Aurangzeb sent a message offering him life on condition of his embracing Islam he replied scornfully that he would become a Muslim if the Emperor would give him his daughter and used language towards the Prophet so blasphemous that the outraged Aurangzeb ordered his immediate execution. The vindictive sentence was carried out at Tuljapur with studied barbarity; his eyes were first destroyed with red-hot iron, his tongue was next cut out, and finally his head was severed from his body along with that of his favourite Kalusha Kabji.

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[16] Elliot & Dawson, Vol. VI, pp. 337-340.

[17] Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 595.

[18] Orme says that Kalusha betrayed his master. But Grant Duff regards the charge as untrue. For a discussion of this point refer to Bharat I. S. Mandal—Itivritta 1836-91.

[19] Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 596.

[20] Kincaid and Parasnis: *History of the Maratha People*, p. 146.

Sambhaji had inherited some military talent from his father but dissipation, vice, and cruelty obscured his few good qualities. Though despised by the Marathas for his faults, his dire fate was universally pitied and resented. The effect of this stupid punishment was, as Grant Duff says, that " the Maratha people, though for the last three years much estranged from him, heard of the murder of the son of Shivaji with indignation and this cruel execution, meant to strike the leaders with terror, aroused their vengeance without alarming their fears." [21]

Rajaram as Regent

On the news of Sambhaji's death, a council of the principal Maratha leaders was held at Raigad to concert future plan for the defence of Maharashtra. Janardan Pant Hanmante, Pralhad Niraji, Ramchandra Pant Bavdekar, Khando Ballal Chitnis, Mahadaji Pansambal, Santaji Ghorpade, Dhanaji Jadhav, Khande Rao Dabhade and others attended. Pralhad Niraji with his superior genius guided the deliberations of this Assembly. None of the assembled chiefs thought of making peace with the Mughals and it was decided in consultation with the wise dowager queen, Yesubai, that Rajaram who had been confined by Sambhaji in the fort of Raigad should be declared regent king during the minority of Shahu who was then only six years old. The power and preparations of Aurangzeb were reviewed and wise and firm measures were unanimously decided upon. They calmly took stock of the situation, of the exhausted treasury, laxity of all discipline, the neglected forts and their possible reduction by the Mughals and calculated their means of resistance. The institutions and regulations of the Great Shivaji were of capital importance in the present crisis and they were eagerly revived. It was further resolved that the Regent should keep moving from fort to fort and should he find it unsafe to remain in Maharashtra he should quit the country and set up his government at far-off Jinji on the Coromandal coast.

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[21] *History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, p. 307.

Yesubai and her son were to remain at Raigad but the family of Rajaram was transferred to Vishalgad and the Maratha chiefs were to act according to circumstances, always keeping themselves as near to the Regent as possible under the circumstances.

Shortly after these arrangements were completed Yatikadkhan (afterwards Zulfikar Khan) captured Raigad in 1690 through the treason of Suryaji Pisal, and the widow of Sambhaji and her son Shivaji fell into that general's hands. The royal prisoners were taken to the camp where they were treated with consideration by the Emperor and where they found a friend in Zebunnissa, the Emperor's daughter.[22]

After the fall of Raigad, Rajaram's position became gradually untenable in Maharashtra and he was advised to make good his way to Jinji before the Mughals learnt about the plan. By the advice of Politic Pralhad Niraji, preliminary arrangements were therefore adopted. Nilopant Moreshwar was wisely appointed to his father's position of Peshwa; the command of all the forts was handed over to Ramchandra Pant Bavdekar with the title of Hukmat-pannah and with full powers of government in the old province; an intelligent and spirited Brahmin Karkun, Parshuram Trimbak, was placed under him as assistant; Sidhoji Gujar, as Sarkhail with Kanoji Angre as a second-in-command, was to look after the fleet, the maritime ports, and the defence of the coast; the old but much respected Mahadaji Naik Pansumbal was appointed Senapati. The foresight of Pralhad Niraji was to be seen as much in these measures as in the opening of correspondence with all the chief Mankaris. These latter were not immediately induced to make common cause against the Mughals but the attempt had the result of directing their inclination to that end.

After visiting the different forts and having disguised themselves as Lingayat cloth-merchants,[23] Rajaram accompanied by Pralhad Niraji, Khando Ballal, Santaji Ghorpade, Dhanaji Jadhav, Khanderao Dabhade,[24] Abaji Sondev and others, a party of twenty-five in all, set out on their journey to the South. The

[22] Douglas: *Bombay and Western India*, Vol. I, p. 347.

[23] See Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 646. Kincaid and Parasnis say that Rajaram's party left Maharashtra as Pilgrims. See *History of the Maratha People*, p. 158. In one Sanas they are said to have disguised as Kapdi, i.e. cloth-sellers. Sarkar says Rajaram slipped out of the fort as a Hindu religious beggar (Yogi), Vol. V, p. 23.

[24] Rajwade: *M. I. Sadhane*, Vol. XIII, p. 48.

plan was well-concerted but the secret leaked out and Rajaram was in great jeopardy near Bangalore. The wary Khando Ballal discovered that it had been planned to arrest the whole party and owing solely to his loyalty[25] and devotion to the cause of Maharashtra Rajaram and his party narrowly escaped being captured, reaching Jinji safely in due course. The Regent's first care was to take over the government from the unwilling hands of Hirji Mahadik's wife and son and to establish a court on his father's plan at this new capital (April 1690).[26] The usual Ashta Pradhans were appointed but the post of Prati Nidhi (representative of the King himself) was specially created for the wise and able Pralhad Niraji who was the soul of the freedom movement at this time. In consequence of the death of the old Senapati Mahadaji Naik, the new incumbent of the post Santaji Ghorpade[27] together with another able captain Dhanaji Jadhav was sent back to Maharashtra "to collect men and plunder the Mughals."

The new court, with Rajaram who now formally sat on the throne[28] as the central figure, began to exercise all the forms of government. Titles, gold bangles and other presents were profusely distributed and inams and jahagirs were bestowed in the Maratha country though it was actually in the enemy possession. These gifts though unsubstantial had the desired effect of keeping alive the interest of the Maratha people and thus ultimately of strengthening the cause.[29] When Sambhaji was executed the Emperor had thought he had killed the Maratha power but the Marathas now gathered new vigour from the very situation that the Emperor had created and the struggle continued unabated. When Aurangzeb saw that a new centre of resistance was brought into existence by the Maratha statesmen, he sent a large army under his ablest General Zulfikar Khan, the captor of Raigad to the Karnatic, with the intention of investing Jinji and thus reducing the Regent and his newly founded court. But the siege continued several years partly because of the impregnable strength of the fort and its heroic defence and partly because of the treasonable tendencies of Zulfikar Khan and Prince Kambash. Before the fort surrendered, however, Rajaram escaped, through the connivance of the General and also the patriotic assistance of the members of the Shirke and Mane families in the Mughal army. At this stage a reorganisation of the Maratha affairs became necessary. The deaths of Pralhad Niraji,[30] Janardan Pant, Santaji Ghorpade and Sidhoji Gujar created vacancies in the government and their places had to be filled up. Another cause of the inactivity of the main body of the Marathas at this period was the personal rivalries and jealousies among the prominent officers of the state and the civil war that resulted between Santaji and Dhanaji. Their dissensions had been kept under control and the worst passions curbed upto this time by the judicious counsel, high influence, and character of the late Pratinidhi but his death left the Maratha State poorer in statesmanship and the personal feud of Santaji and Dhanaji, of Ramchandra Pant Bavdekar and Parashuram Trimbak now came to a head. The adept Emperor fomented these jealousies still further. As an offshot of the quarrel between Dhanaji and Santaji,[31] the Maratha people lost the able services of Santaji Ghorpade, one of the most capable and skilful of its captains who was ungallantly killed by Nagoji Mane[32] as a reprisal for past wrongs.[33] So great was the terror of his name that Khafi Khan says, "that there was no imperial amir bold enough to resist him and every loss he inflicted made the imperial forces quake." Santaji really deserved a better fate at the hands of his countrymen but it is sad to note that the Marathas of that generation found it impossible to forget petty quarrels even in the face of the common peril.

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[25] In spite of tortures applied to him he, with a fine sense of duty, refused to betray the Maratha cause. Kincaid and Parasnis, p. 159.

[26] Refer to Rajwade: *M. I. Sadhane*, Vol. XV, p. 347.

[27] Rajwade: *M. I. Sadhane*, Vol. XV, p. 45.

[28] It was necessary in the political sense for Rajaram to assume the insignia of royalty though there was no coronation for which he had no time. This he had to do for the protection of the kingdom and, as he himself says, in the interest of Shahu—See Rajwade: *M. I. Sadhane*, Vol. XV, p. 286.

[29] Rajaram wrote from Jinji several letters encouraging people in the cause of independence. See Rajwade, Vol. XV, pp. 282-286-347-349-321-322, Vol. XVI, pp. 28-35.

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[30] In 1697 during the siege of Jinji Pralhad Niraji had incurred the displeasure of the regent and broken-hearted by his rebuke had gone on a pilgrimage to Pandharpur and had committed suicide before the shrine of Krishna. See Kincaid and Parasnis, p. 170.

[31] The cause of the quarrel was that in spite of Dhanaji's claims which appeared to him to be superior Santaji had been made Senapati early in Rajaram's reign. See Kincaid & Parasnis, p. 169. Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 667.

[32] Nagoji Mane who had helped Rajaram to escape from Jinji thereafter deserted the Mughal cause. Kincaid & Parasnis, p. 170.

[33] The cause of Santaji's unpopularity with the Maratha soldiers was his strict discipline. See Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I. pp. 666 & 671. He had ordered Nagoji Mane's brother to be trampled to death by an elephant for some military offence. See Kincaid & Parasnis, p. 170. Another account says that Santaji had killed Mane's father-in-law. See Sardesai, *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 668.

When the appointment of new officers [34] to the vacant posts was completed the Maratha counter-offensive began. Rajaram was joined by Parasaji Bhonsley, Hybatrao Nimbalkar, Nemaji Sindhia, Attole and other commanders of note and the mighty force greater than any Shivaji ever had led proceeded to carry the war into enemy country in the North. The Maratha claim to the chouth and sardeshmukhi was enforced in Nandere, Berar and Khandesh and systematic arrangements [35] were this time made to collect the dues. On his return journey Rajaram was plundering Jalna when the Mughals under Zulfikar Khan attacked the Marathas and pursued them with a vigour and perseverance to which they had been of late unaccustomed. The violent exertions of this long and fatiguing retreat brought on the illness which in the end proved fatal and the Regent expired in the fort of Sinhgad in A.D. 1700.

Tara Bai at the Helm of Maratha Affairs

The news of the Regent's death was received by Aurangzeb with unconcealed joy. Just as when he put Sambhaji to death and captured Yesubai and Shahu he had hoped to turn the misfortunes of the Marathas to his own advantage so now with the lawful heir a prisoner in his camp and none as he thought to assume royalty after Rajaram he would conquer the Marathas very easily. But the subjugation of the Marathas was as distant a prospect as ever.

Tara Bai, assisted by Ramchandra Pant Amatya, Sukaaji Narayan and Dhanaji Jadhav, the senapati, at once assumed the reins of government and her son Shivaji [36] was seated on the throne. Overawed by her vigour and thinking it undesirable to create dissensions in the Maratha state, Ramchandra Pant did not press his point though at first he protested that the true king was Shahu. By common consent Rajasbai and her son were placed in confinement. Parashram Trimbak was now raised to the rank of Pratinidhi much to the disgust of Ramchandra Pant and the New Sachiv. Tara Bai did not fix her residence in any fort but moved about from place to place according to circumstances. The counter-offensive which had begun under Rajaram was then conducted with vigour and energy under Dhanaji Jadhav, Nimbalkar, Bhonsley, Thorat, Chavan, Shinde, Powar, Athavle and other chiefs who headed large bodies of troops in different directions and levied tribute under the heads of Chouth, Sardeshmukhi and Ghasdama.[37] The Maratha leaders were thus spreading terror far and wide in the Mughal territory when the death of Aurangzeb (Feb. 1707) created a new political situation and all military operations automatically came to an end.

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[34] Sardesai—*Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, pp. 671-72.

[35] *M. Riyasat*, Vol. I, pp. 674-675.

[36] Early in 1701, Tara Bai's son, Shivaji, then a child, was crowned at Panhalla with the customary splendour. See Kincaid & Parasnis, p. 178. Ramchandra Pant was against the coronation as he rightly thought that Shahu was the legitimate king though now in custody. He therefore opposed this move but afterwards patriotically withdrew his opposition. See Sardesai, *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, pp. 687-688.

Review of the War of Independence

Sambhaji's first campaign was in his father's best manner. With lightening rapidity the new king who wanted to celebrate his accession by the sack of a great Mughal city[38] led his horse to Burhanpur, the capital of Khandesh and the richest town in the Deccan Viceroyalty. The merchants were caught unawares and a vast booty fell into the hands of the Marathas. The Viceroy, Khan Jehan, receiving the news of this disaster hastened to its relief. But the Marathas escaped. The Maratha raid and Khan Jehan's inefficiency so much exasperated the citizens of Burhanpur that they threatened to renounce their allegiance to the Emperor by discontinuing their Friday prayers.[39] Aurangzeb saw that the time had now come to take the Deccan imbroglio into his own hands. Some decisive action must be taken and the Emperor resolved to go to the Deccan in person. The real cause of this move was the revolt of the Rajputs and the rebellion of Prince Akbar who had been seduced by the diplomacy of the Rajput leaders. Akbar[40] proclaimed himself

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[37] The last named item of Ghasdama was generally considered the personal perquisite of the chief.

[38] Kincaid and Parasnis: *History of the Maratha People*, p. 119.

[39] Sarkar: *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. IV, p. 247.

[40] Sarkar: *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. III, p. 406 and also Vol. IV, p. 248.

Emperor of India but by a clever ruse[41] Aurangzeb succeeded in neutralising the effect of this combination. The Rajputs and the Mughals deserted Akbar and the Prince fled to the Deccan and became a guest of Sambhaji. Sambhaji was not statesman-like enough to understand or take advantage of the opportunity, thus presented, of using the heir-apparent to create division in the Mughal camp and give infinite trouble to Aurangzeb. Not receiving the expected help from the Maratha king, Akbar in disgust eventually sailed for Persia and never again returned to the realm of his father.

Owing to the defection of his son Akbar, Aurangzeb patched up a peace with the Rajputs and at the close of 1681 arrived at Burhanpur to take the command of the army.

Sambhaji had internal troubles to meet and in addition he was busy during the winter of 1681-82 in prosecuting the perennial war with the Siddis of Janjira. This was a good opportunity for the Emperor. His generals took Kalian-Bhimri, sacked Shivapur and Hasanali got some successes. At this time the siege of Janjira was proceeding but the news of these Mughal victories recalled the Maratha King, to his great chagrin, from his unfinished work. Leaving 10,000 men behind to keep up the attack Sambhaji returned to Raigad to make his defensive arrangements.[42] Soon after this Aurangzeb transferred himself to Aurangabad (1682, March) and the Mughals laid siege to Ramsej.[43] It was defended by a gallant Maratha garrison led by an expert Killedar[44] and the repeated attempts of the Mughals produced no impression on it. Aurangzeb's spirit was now roused and he decided on extensive operations[45] against the Marathas. The campaign that followed was, however, a failure and Aurangzeb achieved nothing notable during these days (1681-83) in spite of his vast resources. He was passing, as Sircar remarks, through a domestic and mental crisis. The sudden rebellion of Prince Akbar had shaken him and he did not know whom to trust and where he would be safe.[46]

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[41] *Ibid*, pp. 413-14. Khafi Khan does not believe in the story of the letter having been written.

[42] See Orme, p. 110.

[43] This fort is seven miles north of Nasik.

[44] Khafi Khan says even the third general sent against it (July 1682) could not capture it. Subsequently after Sambhaji had promoted the brave killedar to a higher post the Mughals bribed his successor into surrendering the fort. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. II, p. 284. On this occasion the siege had to be raised and the exultant Marathas crowded the walls beating their drums for joy and taunting the retreating Mughals in the foulest language. See Sarkar, Vol. IV, p. 259.

[45] The English at Karwar record: " He is so inveterate against the Rajah that he hath thrown off his pagri and sworn never to put it on again till he hath either killed, taken or routed him out of his country."

Sambhaji's War with the Siddis and the Portuguese

In the meanwhile Sambhaji was making determined efforts to reduce Janjira. But though spirit and valour were not wanting on the part of the Marathas, all their efforts failed in the absence of the command of the sea. The plot of Kondaji Farzand[47] was discovered; his attempt to build a causeway to the island did not fructify; his navy led by Siddi Misri, a deserter from Janjira, was defeated in a naval engagement by Siddi Yakut, the most skilful sailor of his times and he was called away to defend his kingdom against the Mughals when he was thick in his fight with the Siddis.

In his war with the Portuguese, Sambhaji fared better. The Portuguese nation had drawn the wrath of the Maratha king on their head by their recent alliance[48] with the Mughals and by allowing the Mughal ships to pass under their fort of Thana up the creek of Kalian.[49] In 1683 Sambhaji besieged the Portuguese fortress of Chawl but both in attack and defence his engineers were behind the Portuguese and the attempt had ultimately to be given up; while the attack[50] of the Viceroy of Goa at Ponda ended in a disastrous retreat for the Portuguese. Alvor was harassed by charges of the Maratha horse and leaving behind his baggage and siege train, made good his retreat to Goa with the loss of 200 Europeans and 1,000 Indian sepoys. The Maratha king next tried to take Goa by fraud on the advice of Prince Akbar but the plot was discovered by the Venetian adventurer Manucci.[51] Sambhaji thereupon marched with 7,000 cavalry and 15,000 infantry against Goa, overran the district of Bardez and Sasthi and took the island of Santo Estavao. (1683). The next day the viceroy attempted to retake this island but he was forced to retreat with heavy loss and after receiving a bullet wound in his arm.[52] Several days passed in furious attacks by the Marathas and desperate resistance by the Portuguese. The Marathas took the forts of Rachol, Tivim and Chapora and with the surrender of Madgaon it seemed certain that they would force their way to Goa. There was panic and uproar at Goa; despair seized the chivalrous Alvor and in his extremity he went the length of invoking the miraculous help of St. Francis Xavier.[53] The Portuguese were saved from the imminent peril only by the timely arrival of the Mughals under Prince Shah Alam.

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[46] Sarcar, Vol. IV, p. 262.

[47] For details of this plot refer to Itihas Sangraha (Junya Iitihasic Gosthi.)

[48] Kincaid and Parasnis: *History of the Maratha People*, p. 122.

[49] Sarkar: *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. IV, p. 270.

[50] For the trick to lure the Portuguese to this attack—see Kincaid and Parasnis, p. 123.

[51] *Storia do Mogor*, Vol. II, p. 262.

In the northern theatre of the war also "the Portuguese were severely beaten." Several towns were captured by the Peshwa and Thana and Salsette were in risk of being taken. The English factors feared that "in a short time[54] from Chaul to Daman in appearance all may be his." The Portuguese had now enough to their war with the Marathas and they took advantage of the Mughal invasion of the Konkan to make their peace with the Maratha King. Intermittent hostility with the Portuguese, however, continued till the end of Sambhaji's reign.[55] They had foolishly undertaken this war relying on Aurangzeb's friendship and co-operation, unaware of the Emperor's real design to annex Goa after exerminating the Deccan kings.[56] They had neither the resources nor (if the factory records are to be believed) the courage for such an enterprise and they lost heavily both in men and money and brought Goa very near to capture to boot. On Sambhaji's part he was frittering away his power in a useless war when he ought to have wisely concentrated all his strength against the great enemy on his eastern flank—Aurangzeb. Sambhaji did not follow sound policy in allowing himself to be diverted from the main issue by this war which needlessly drained precious blood of the Maratha State.

While Sambhaji was thus busy with his fight with the Portuguese, concentrating all his attention on a decisive blow as if there was no other enemy to attend to, the Emperor was stealing a march over him. The prospects of the imperialists had begun to brighten up. Sambhaji had the war with the Portuguese on his hands and due to his profligacy, capriciousness and violence his government was gradually declining. A general disaffection among his officers and vassals had been created and it being fomented by Aurangzeb there were frequent desertions to the enemy.[57] To add to this, Aurangzeb had been relieved of his anxiety on the score of Prince Akbar by the latter's flight to Persia. He was not slow to profit by these favourable circumstances. His cautions inactivity ended and the great Mughal offensive was launched, after a grand plan of attacking Sambhaji had been matured in a council of war.

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[52] See *Ibid*, p. 271.
[53] See Kincaid and Parasnis, pp. 124-125.
[54] See English Records quoted by Sarcar, Vol. IV, p. 278.
[55] Manucci: *Storia do Mogor*, pp. 260-282.
[56] Sarkar, Vol. IV, p. 279.

Accordingly Prince Moazam (Shah Alam) marched from Aurangabad with a great army and overran Konkan without opposition. But this was a useless proceeding. The Marathas left the rocks and thickets of Konkan to punish the invaders and when Shah Alam reached the end of his journey he had scarcely a horse fit to carry him. The Marathas cut down the grass, cut off the vessels that were sent with supplies by sea, and starvation stared the Mughal army in the face. Khafi Khan remarks, "Those who escaped death dragged on a half-existence and with crying and groaning felt as if every breath they drew was their last. There was not a noble who had a horse in his stable fit to use."[58] The Maratha horse systematically harassed their retreat and Shah Alam thought himself fortunate when fighting torrents and precipices and enduring an unhealthy climate and scarcity of food, the miserable remnant of the army, with its woe-begone condition, found the welcome shelter of the walls of Ahmednagar. Shah Alam had achieved nothing in Konkan beyond burning a few villages and robbing a few towns.[59]

The expedition of Prince Azam Shah who had been sent to reduce the hill-forts near the junction of the Chandor range with the Ghats, was also a failure. After the strong fort of Salher was handed over to him by previous concert he retired to the imperial headquarters. Aurangzeb so far failed to get any substantial advantage over the Marathas, his attempt to overawe the Marathas by sending his sons, Shah Alam and

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[57] Sarkar: *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. IV, p. 287.
[58] Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 314.
[59] Sarkar, Vol. IV, p. 294.

Prince Azam, to scour the country having miscarried as we have seen above. He now resolved to change his tactics and first applied himself to the darling project of his life, viz. the annexation of Bijapur and Golkonda.[60] The pressure upon the Marathas relaxed and the Deccan offensive entered on a new phase. He despatched a powerful force to invade Bijapur directing Prince Azam and Shah Alam to co-operate in the project and himself advanced to Ahmednagar. "His plan seems to have been," as Stanley Lane-Poole says, "first to cut off the sources of the Maratha revenue by exterminating the kingdoms of Golkonda and Bijapur which paid tribute to the brigands; and then to ferret the "mountain rats" out of their holes. He clearly thought that the two kingdoms formed his real point of attack and that after their fall it would be easy to deal with the Marathas. Evidently he did not know his men."[61]

When the Mughals turned their back, the Marathas got an opportunity to retaliate the invasion of their country. Sambhaji assembled a body of his active horse and led them in the usual fashion typical of the Maratha method of warfare, behind their flank and crossing over to Khandesh sacked Dharangaon.[62] Leaving the whole country-side in a blaze, the Marathas quickly drew off to their fastnesses in the Ghats before the Mughals could get at them. The forts, however, that had been taken remained in the hands of the Mughal garrisons. After Diler Khan had been forced to raise the siege of Bijapur (1680) there had been no active hostilities between Bijapur and Aurangzeb. Sambhaji's audacious raids carried out with startling rapidity and unexpectedness had distracted the Mughals. But the Adilshahi was now in the process of dissolution and had not profited in any way by this respite from foreign attack. The Bijapur government had been appealed in 1681 to co-operate in the war with the Marathas. But knowing that the destruction of Sambhaji would be followed by their own, the Bijapuris preferred to send help to the Marathas who were their only reliable friend in the day of their need as in 1679. To punish this Aurangzeb began his final operations against Bijapur in 1685 and these were facilitated by the hopeless condition of the Bijapur Government. After initial failure of his sons, Aurangzeb advanced in person to Sholapur and at a later period moved on to the siege in person. When the siege of Bijapur[63] began the Bijapuris resorted to their guerilla tactics, laying waste all the country round the capital and harassing the movements of the Mughal army with obstinate pertinacity. Immense indeed were the difficulties of the imperialists. The ground around Bijapur was very hard; the garrison sallied out at will and gave them no rest; and Allies flocked to Adil Shah in his present distress.[64] A Golkonda force under Ambaji Pandit advanced to Bijapur and the Marathas under Hambirrao Mohite harassed the Mughal communication with the North.[65] Another body of Maratha horse made a bold inroad into Gujrat and plundered Broach.[66] The effect of these troubles was heightened by a famine that broke out in the Imperial camp. Thus the siege dragged on for fifteen months but there was no decision. Aurangzeb, then arrived upon the scene in person and the work of mining and intrenching went on vigorously under his own eyes. So well was the blockade established that by the time the breach was practicable the garrison was starved out and the famous city surrendered in September 1686.[67]

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[60] Kincaid & Parasnis: *History of the Maratha People*, p. 129.

[61] *Aurangzeb, Rulers of India Series*, p. 175. Refer also to *Mediaeval India* by the same author, p. 394.

[62] Sarkar, Vol. IV, p. 198.

Golkonda soon felt the loss of her protecting sister.[68] No sooner did Bijapur fall than Aurangzeb marched to the conquest of Golkonda. In January 1687 the Mughals took post within a gunshot range and the leaguer of the citadel of Golkonda began. The heroic and gallant defence of the faithful Abder Razzak and the eleventh hour efforts of the King Abu Hussein could not succeed in an age in which treachery was the order of the day. After a seven months' siege[69] Golkonda was given up to the Mughals. Thus were the two Deccan Sultanates trampled under the foot of the Northern invader and Aurangzeb's life-long ambition was at last satisfied. With the conquest of Bijapur and Golkonda he took possession of all the territories of the late Deccan kingdoms, including their latest southern conquest.[70] He sieged Shahaji's Mysore jahagir and confined Venkoji to Tanjore. The Marathas, owing to the quarrels[71] and jealousy between Harji Mahadik, the viceroy at Jinji and Keshav Pingle who had been sent by Sambhaji in 1687 to safeguard the Maratha possessions in southern India, were compelled to fly to their forts. In all this territory Aurangzeb had little more than a military occupation.

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[63] For the description and strength of the Adilshahi capital refer to Bombay Gazetteer, Vol. XXIII.

[64] Sarkar, Vol. IV, p. 313.

[65] Kincaid & Parasnis, p. 129.

[66] Elphinstone, *History of India*, p. 636.

[67] See Sarkar, Vol. IV, p. 324.

[68] *Lane Poole*: Aurangzeb, p. 181.

[69] For details of these sieges refer to: Sarkar, Vol. IV, pp. 311-326, and pp. 361-386; Kincaid & Parasnis, pp. 129-139.

During all these days the Maratha King remained in a state of personal inertness which was the natural result of the stupor and mental debility produced by a course of drunkenness and debauchery. Notwithstanding the vicious idleness of Sambhaji, the chiefs like veteran Hambir Rao were exerting themselves individually against the Mughals. But the Mughal troops soon recovered the Bijapur and Golkonda provinces which the Marathas had recently occupied. In spite of their opposition, the open Maratha country was gradually taken possession of by Aurangzeb. His armies operating from their base at Bijapur swept through the Maratha Deccan and reduced Shivaji's line of fortresses between Tathavda and Panhalla. Aurangzeb was preparing for a systematic attack on the other Maratha forts when the Maratha Raja was unexpectedly captured by the Imperialists.

While Aurangzeb was directing the full force of the Mughal Empire towards the subjugation of Bijapur and Golkonda, the spineless Maratha King had taken no adequate measures to meet the common danger. Without any well-thought out plan his soldiers raided the Mughal towns but that had no influence on the military situation. Confident that he would be the better able to destroy Sambhaji for ever once the two Deccan kingdoms were permanently conquered the Emperor ignored these pinpricks. Had the Maratha Sovereign fortified himself in some impregnable fort like Raigad, relying upon the Maratha spirit which had not yet fallen low he had at least a chance of escaping his terrible ordeal. But instead he betook himself to Sangameshwar[72] and gave himself up to every sort of intemperance. While Maharashtra was falling fast under the heel of the invader this "Nero" was dallying with women and wine.[73] As he was thus sunk in vice, his government had been hopelessly weakened by frequent rebellious desertions and plots against his authority.[74] Sambhaji with his favourite minister Kalusha Kabji was arrested at Sangameshwar and both were put to death with circumstances of exceptional barbarity. Thus came the troubled reign of the inglorious Sambhaji to an end. But the self-respecting and spirited martyrdom of their King, however, had in other respects, raised the indignation and religious hatred of the whole nation to a higher pitch than ever.

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[70] Orme: *Fragments*, p. 156.

[71] Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 587.

[72] A small town 20 miles north of Vishalgad and 22 miles north-east of Ratnagiri.

The capture of Sambhaji induced high hopes of speedy termination of the wearisome war in the Imperial camp; there was immense rejoicing everywhere. The regular troops looked forward to the coming peace with joy as the same meant a triumphant return home; the nobles of Bijapur and Golkonda, now officers in the Mughal service, were happy to think of the enjoyment of the fiefs acquired by their recent treachery; the wretched peasantry hoped to get a much needed respite from the devastating war; the Emperor himself thought Maharashtra to be fully within his iron grip. But they all were building castles in the air. As Sarkar pointedly remarks, "All seemed to have been gained by Aurangzeb now; but in reality all was lost. It was the beginning of his end. The saddest and most hopeless chapter of his life now opened. The Mughal Empire had become too large to be ruled by one man or from one centre. His enemies rose on all sides; he could defeat but not crush them for ever. Lawlessness reigned in many parts of Northern and Central India. The administration grew slack and corrupt. The endless war in the Deccan exhausted his treasury." [75] Aurangzeb's mad act had only fanned the fury of the Maratha people into a patriotic flame which consumed all his cherished dreams. The spirit of Shivaji's people was up. Under Sambhaji it was languishing for want of proper direction but under Rajaram whom the Maratha council now nominated Regent their former despondency gave place to hope and their optimism returned. New leaders both civil and military enthusiastically came forward to serve their country and by their ability and fortitude sustained the fortunes of the Maratha people which had suffered in the previous regime only a temporary eclipse. Under the mild and self-sacrificing Rajaram the Marathas recovered their confidence and carried on the life and death struggle with the Mughal invaders with a dogged determination which made the war of Independence a glorious chapter in the history of the Marathas.

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[73] He even seized the comely bride of a Maratha noble on her way to join her husband. See Orme: *Fragments*, p. 107.

[74] Sarkar, Vol. IV, pp. 396-97.

[75] *Studies in Mughal India*, p. 50.

Aurangzeb who wanted to take Raigad before he returned to Delhi now sent Itikad Khan with heavy guns and a large army to reduce it. In the meanwhile the Marathas regained their former self-possession and the daring captain Santaji Ghorpade boldly raided the Emperor's camp [76] at Tulapur. Slipping through the sleeping sentries the Maratha band suddenly rushed at the Emperor's tent. Aurangzeb was elsewhere at that time and thus escaped capture. The Marathas cut the gold tops off his tent poles and carried them as trophies. This courageous feat of Santaji, though unsuccessful in its main object of the Emperor's capture, inspired the soldiers with confidence in their own prowess and improved their morals. On the other hand Itikad Khan, after several months' siege secured Raigad, the Maratha capital, through the interested treason [77] of the military governor, Suryaji Pisal, and Yesubai and her son came into Aurangzeb's possession. Even this stroke did not cow down their spirit; a new government was set up at Jinji and the war went on as before. Panhalla had to be next surrendered and though Ghatge with the advice of Ramchandra Bavdekar accepted the title and the fief of Kagal at the hands of Maharashtra's enemy he sent his brother with all valuables to Jinji as a token of his intention to return to his allegiance at the first opportunity. The fall of Miraj followed in the wake of Panhalla. The time of putting the great King's strategic plan of falling back on Jinji into execution had now arrived and accordingly a council of his chief officers agreed that the Regent should leave Maharashtra. Ramchandra Bavdekar was left behind as Hukumat-pannah in supreme command of the

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[76] Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 627. Refer also to Kavyetihas Sangraha, letters and Sanads, pp. 406-407-422.

[77] Suryaji wanted the Deshmukhi of Wai and to gain his selfish end not only betrayed the cause of his country but also became a Muslim. For this act of treason Shahu afterwards took a fearful vengeance by putting him and several members of his family to death. See Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 617.

Maratha affairs to organise resistance with instructions that every stronghold should be defended to the last while the field army should strike successive blows at the long line of Aurangzeb's communications and dispersing in their villages should be ready to profit by better times. The perilous plan of the retreat on Jinji was then carried out in spite of the fact that Rajaram ran the risk of being arrested on his journey through hostile provinces. Had the Regent shut himself up in any fortress his freedom of action would have gone, and he would have been captured like Yesubai and her son, for, sooner or later all his forts would have been taken by Aurangzeb. Moreover it was a wise strategy to compel the enemy to divide his forces by transferring Maratha activities to some distant centre which was comparatively immune from the Emperor's attack while his officers kept the Mughals under some check in Maharashtra. At Jinji, too, the Marathas could hope to make a stand with the help of their compatriots in that part of the country. Aurangzeb had fondly hoped that the absence of the lawful heir to the Maratha throne would create opportune factions in the Maratha State but the good sense and patriotism of Yesubai and the generous loyalty of Rajaram frustrated all his hopes. He was now called upon by reason of the establishment of a new Maratha government at Jinji to decide whether he would remain in the Deccan till he had conquered it fort by fort or whether he would besiege Jinji. The choice was really difficult. If he followed Rajaram to Jinji the whole Deccan would be aflame again; if on the other hand Rajaram was left alone he would conquer the whole of the eastern sea-board and make Jinji an impregnable stronghold. Aurangzeb continued the subjugation of the Deccan but sent a small force to keep Rajaram in check until he himself would be free to engage him with the main army. But they had not reckoned with Santaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadhav. These enterprising captains aided by the talented Pralhad Niraji soon raised a disciplined body of fresh troops and attacked and destroyed the Mughal force which was to have kept the Marathas at Jinji in check.

In the Deccan the Emperor's operations began to encounter increasingly more vigorous opposition from the volunteers of the Viceroy, Ramchandra Bavdekar. In the cold season of 1691 Sinhagad and Purandar were indeed reduced. But no sooner was the Regent settled in the new capital at Jinji than Santaji and Dhanaji were sent back to command the Maratha forces in the Deccan and make a diversion. When these well-known leaders made their appearance Maratha horsemen issuing from every village flocked to their standards. Santaji at once surprised the Mughal garrison at Wai and recaptured Miraj fort. The policy of the new Maratha Government in assigning jahagirs to the Maratha military leaders in the regions now occupied by the Mughals began at this time to bear ample fruit. Every man of some consequence encouraged by these grants equipped troops at his own expense, established strong places in the midst of the enemy possessions and reclaimed not only every part of the former Swarajya territory but conquered other portions of the Mughal Empire. Maratha bands under Patankar, Powar and Atole appeared in Khandesh, South Gujrat, the Central Provinces and the country now known as the Nizam's dominions, to enforce grants bestowed at Jinji and levied Chowth and Sardeshmukhi. The Dhangar levies of Ramchandra Pant retook a number of walled villages. While these activities were going on, Santaji and Dhanaji threw themselves between the Emperor's army and Hindustan from where Aurangzeb used to get his recruits and treasures. They intercepted several convoys, defeated more than one detachment, and generally established such a superiority over the Mughals that the enemy now began to exchange dread of the Marathas for contempt of their military capacity. As the Marathas gained more and more confidence and grew bolder and bolder in their attacks, their former awe for the overwhelming force of Aurangzeb, his personal reputation and the grandeur and prestige of the Great Mughal began to wane. The Marathas gradually recovered from the disastrous effects of their late king's suicidal policy and Maharashtra began unmistakably, if slowly, to assert its military superiority under their new popular chiefs.

In this discouraging state of affairs Aurangzeb realised that he must retrieve his own reputation and do something to restore the drooping spirit of his soldiers. He, therefore, despatched a considerable army with the captor of Raigad, Zulfikar Khan, at its head to take Jinji (1691). The Maratha position possessed natural strength and was skilfully and heroically defended by Rajaram and his coadjuters. Neither was

Zulfikar Khan's force equal to the task. The siege dragged on for years[78] and it was not till January 1698 that the fort was taken.

In 1692 the Maratha arms met with two important successes. Shankar Narayan Gadekar recaptured Raigad and another clerk, Parashuram Trimbak, took Panhalla by escalade. In 1693 the Marathas destroyed a number of enemy detachments, capturing their generals and holding them to ransom. Prince Kambaksha, the Emperor's youngest son, was sent with a fresh army to relieve Zulfikar Khan of his command and the veteran general was ordered to serve under the Prince. But according to his usual practice he associated Asad Khan, father of Zulfikar Khan, with Kambaksha and committed the direction of all operations to their joint hands. This arrangement and the supersession of the able general Zulfikar Khan disgusted both the parties and the consequent dissensions made vigorous siege operations impossible. The garrison made spirited sorties and destroyed the trenches and the outposts while Santaji held the roads by which the Mughal convoys sought to reach the besiegers. So feeble did the siege become that at last the Maratha commanders resolved on a bold attempt to relieve their king. According to Chitnis Bakhar the Maratha forces at this time under their different generals, Santaji, Dhanaji, Parsoji Bhosle and Sidhoji Nimbalkar, numbered nearly a hundred thousand. Leaving the rest of the Maratha hordes to keep Aurangzeb occupied in the Deccan, Dhanaji Jadhav rapidly passed through the intervening country and came on the besieging army with such surprising celerity that the division under Ismail Khan was forced to surrender with his whole command. Santaji Ghorpade likewise surrounded Ali Mardan Khan and his division with its entire transport, arms and equipage fell into the Maratha hands. The Marathas next circulated reports of the Emperor's death which were readily believed and made proposals to Kambaksha[79] to support his claim to the throne. Exasperated by the insubordination of Zulfikar Khan and his party and apprehending sinister designs on the part of Asad Khan, Kambaksha listened to Rajaram's envoys. He agreed [80] to desert with his troops and one day he was preparing to do so but the two generals saved the situation by putting him under restraint.[81] "This step increased the alarms and dissensions in the army to such a pitch," says Elphinstone, "that they were soon compelled to blow up their cannon, abandon their batteries, and concentrate on one spot where they entrenched themselves and were besieged in their turn." The Mughals were reduced to such straits that Asad Khan was forced at length to make secret overtures of peace to Rajaram offering a heavy bribe if he was allowed to retreat to Wandewash unmolested. The Maratha generals and ministers pressed their king to continue the war and crush the half-starved imperial army. The Regent, however, agreed to an armistice; the Mughals were to retire unmolested to Wandewash and await there the further orders of the Emperor.[82]

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[78] The fort could not be taken because of the gallant bravery of Rajaram's garrison and the strength of the fort. See Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I. But other historians say that it was so because of the treasonable compact of Zulfikar Khan with the Marathas within the fort. See Kincaid & Parasnis: *History of the Maratha People*, p. 162.

[79] Elphinstone: *History of India*, p. 646.

When Aurangzeb heard that the siege of Jinji had been raised he sent orders recalling both Kambaksha and Asad Khan. Asad Khan was severely reprimanded and the prince he pretended to pardon but sometime later [83] ordered his strict confinement. The sole command of the army was left with unaccountable inconsistency to Zulfikar Khan. The war when renewed assumed a desultory character. Zulfikar Khan levied a large contribution from Tanjore [84] and in the end resumed the siege of Jinji. Santaji Ghorpade, unable to cope with the large force now at the sole disposal of Zulfikar Khan, entered the southern provinces of Bijapur [85] and destroyed totally near

[80] Kincaid and Parasnis, p. 165.

[81] Elphinstone: *History of India*, p. 646.

[82] Both Asad Khan who was unwilling to cease hostilities without the Emperor's orders and Santaji Ghorpade who was confident of destroying the entire investing army opposed this truce. See Kincaid and Parasnis, pp. 165-66. But Sarkar says Asad Khan now made secret overtures of peace to Rajaram. According to him it was Dalpat Rao Bundela who opposed the retreat. See Vol. V, p. 90. Mr. Sardesai also says that Asad Khan opened the negotiations. *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 659.

[83] Scott: *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 94; Elphinstone however says that the prince was received with marked kindness. *History of India*, p. 646.

[84] The object of Zulfikar Khan at this time is not clear. G. Duff says that it was his ambition to found an independant kingdom in the Deccan after Aurangzeb's death. He levied contribution from Shahaji at Tanjore and forced him to agree not to help the Marathas at Jinji. For the agreement see Itihas Sangraha, Tanjawarchen Gharane, p. 50.

[85] Scott: *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 91.

Chitaldurg a very strong detachment under Kasim Khan[86] who committed suicide. Another large Mughal force which was advancing with all speed to Kasim Khan's relief fared no better. Himat Khan, the general, fell and his army surrendered at discretion (1696).[87] These successes tempted Santaji to try once more to relieve Jinji but Zulfikar Khan who performed the part of a zealous and able officer in the field defeated him some miles to the north. By 1697 the siege had become a blockade and was bloodless but for the senseless drunken assaults of Daud Khan, the second-in-command.[88] Zulfikar Khan had renewed his intercourse with the Marathas and it seemed he wanted to protract the fall of the fort.[89] About this time, however, the general was warned that he must either take Jinji or expect to be recalled in disgrace. It was no longer possible to keep up this sham fight and Rajaram, with the co-operation of Ganoji and Ranoji Shirke and Ranoji Mane which Khando Ballal[90] secured for his king by appealing to their patriotic feelings and by agreeing to their demands at a considerable sacrifice to himself and also with Zulfikar Khan's friendly connivance,[91] escaped to Vishalgad (Dec. 1697).[92] The operations were then prosecuted with vigour and in earnest and in January 1698 the fort at last fell into Zulfikar Khan's hands.

The Emperor had not been the gainer in his struggle. The entire work of his long siege was undone by the escape of its prize. The protracted siege had strained the resources of the Empire. The Marathas had repeatedly proved themselves equal or even superior to his troops. As remarked by Kincaid and Parasnis, the sanctuary created by the Great King, had done its work. The time had come when the Maratha counter-offensive might begin.

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[86] Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 347.

[87] Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 355. See also Scott: *Deccan*, p. 95.

[88] Wilkes: *Historical Sketches of the South of India*, Vol. I, p. 133.

[89] See Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I.

[90] Sardesai, Vol. I, pp. 662-663 and 634-35.

[91] G. Duff: *History of the Marathas*. Sarkar, Vol. V, pp. 100 and 107. Kincaid & Parasnis, p. 168. Elphinstone, p. 647. All Zulfikar Khan's treasonable collusions with the enemy appear from Maratha mss. and are asserted by Col. Wilkes. They are unknown to Mughal writers. His object appears to retain his large command and important position until the death of the Emperor. Mr. Sardesai, however, holds that the evidence is against his treason. *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, pp. 634-35 and 664.

[92] Wilkes: *Historical Sketches*, p. 133.

The dissensions among the Marathas now assumed serious proportion. Dhanaji Jadhav[93] had fallen out with Santaji Ghorpade and their quarrel in particular resulting as it did in the death of Santaji encouraged the enemy of Maharashtra. Santaji's death was a great blow to the Maratha cause.[94] For seven years he inspired terror in the enemy ranks and indeed so great was the fear of the names of Santaji and Dhanaji that the Mughals used, when their horses refused to drink, to ask them whether they saw the face of Santaji or Dhanaji in the water.[95] After the death of this brilliant soldier Aurangzeb devoted himself more earnestly to the subjugation of the Western Deccan. There was a change in the Mughal strategy. His plan was to lead one part of his army in person against the enemy's forts and drive the Marathas into the plains, while another part under the renowned Zulfikar Khan should pursue and overwhelm their field armies wherever they might direct their courses.[96] Had this plan been adopted earlier it might have perhaps succeeded. But the disturbances had now reached so high that mere military dispositions were not enough to put them down. His army, too, had been greatly depleted by death and disease, discharges and desertions and it did not at this period very much outnumber the Regent's forces. To capture forts meant also more men to garrison them. The result was the Marathas had already taken back some forts and more were now reconquered from the Mughals. In 1693 were recovered Vishalgad, Torna and Rohida, Suvarnadurg and Vijaidurg.

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[93] In this Dhanaji had the support of the Raja who was displeased with Santaji's vanity, arrogant manners and spirit of insubordination and who also suspected him of treason. It is also said that Rajaram was jealous of the latter's renown. See Elphinstone: *History of India*, p. 647.

[94] Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 661. Sarkar who is ever fond of connecting Marathas and brigandage in and out of season says of this veteran soldier: " He lived and died merely as a most successful brigand and selfish adventurer and exercised no influence on the political history of the Marathas or even on the general effect of Aurangzeb's campaigns." This estimate of Santaji is wide of the mark. He was the legally appointed Senapati of the Marathas and hence he was not a brigand. Then his brilliant victories wielded a great influence in making contemporary history inasmuch as " he inspired abject fear in all ranks of the Mughal army ", as Sarkar himself says (Vol. V, p. 127). His military genius which was chiefly instrumental in reviving the martial spirit of the Marathas was unquestioned and of him Mr. Sardesai remarks that Ramchandra Pant and Santaji were the two persons who were exerting themselves against the disruption of Shivaji's system (*Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 671). His character suffers in comparison with that of his rival Dhanaji but of the two he was a more capable and enterprising soldier though both were, as Sarkar admits (Vol. V, pp. 128-129), army leaders and organisers of the highest ability, courage and activity. It is therefore wrong if not foolish to say of Santaji the unkind words quoted above. His " most dazzling military career " (Sarkar's words, Vol. V, p. 127) would give the lie direct to such a charge. The fact is Sarkar has been on several occasions at pains to connect brigandage with Maratha names and has therefore run into gross contradiction.

[95] Kincaid and Parasnis, p. 170. Also Sarkar, Vol. V, p. 127.

[96] Elphinstone: *History of India*, p. 648.

To discuss the new plan of the Mughal campaign, Rajaram called his chief officers to Satara which was by this time the Maratha Capital. Eight years had elapsed since Rajaram had left his home as a youth and had wandered in the wilderness. During all these years nobly had he borne the heavy burden of State. Through extreme peril he had set up his government at distant Jinji and had withstood a siege scarcely less short than that of Troy[97] but with more skill and valour than those of Hector. Big armies had been created, campaigns planned, and through an endless darkness the flickering flame of his country's cause had been kept alive. And now when the Emperor thought that he had crushed him for ever he had re-appeared in his kingdom and assumed the active control of his government from Ramchandra Bavdekar. He disclosed to the council his policy of letting Aurangzeb wear out his army besieging the fortresses. He and his lieutenants would invade with large bodies of horse the enemy country and thus while the Emperor was trying to destroy his bases, they would retaliate by destroying his.

Both sides wanted to strike the first blow but the Maratha king was the first in the field. The armies under Dhanaji Jadhav (Senapati), Parshuram Trimbak, Shankar Narayan, Parsoji Bhonsle, Haibatrao Nimbalkar, Nemaji Shinde and Atole were called together. Rajaram put himself at the head of this whole force, the largest that had ever assembled under the Maratha banner, and moved towards the Godavary valley, levying Chouth and Sardeshmukhi from such places as submitted and ravaging the rest as far as Jalna in Berar. This time he did not come as a mere raider but could give the people protection and exercise sovereignty. He divided the country into military districts and left each in the charge of a strong detachment under a famous general. Khanderao Dabhade took post in Baglan and Northern Nasik; Parsoji Bhosle in Berar;

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[97] See Wilkes: *History of Mysore* for this comparison.

Nemaji Shinde in Khandesh and Haibatrao Nimbalkar in the valley of the Godavari. The King himself marched with a considerable body of cavalry to plunder the rich city of Jalna, in the neighbourhood of Aurangabad. After the Regent's departure Nemaji won an important success near Nandarbar over Hussein Ali Khan,[98] the Mughal commander in that quarter. When the Marathas were thus bringing the enemy territory under their systematic sway, the Emperor had begun his campaign. Quitting his camp at Brahmapuri to the great regret of his officers who had been accustomed to their comfortable dwellings which they had built there, he led out his grand army in 1699 to reduce one by one the Maratha strongholds. Vasantgad surrendered without resistance[99] and the Emperor sat down before Satara. By a dexterous feint he tried to take that fort unprepared but the devoted and loyal Prabhu commandant Prayagji Anant made a desperate defence.[1] Azim Shah was brought over and convoys of food and munitions passed from Parli into Satara. It was not until the siege had lasted for several months and the news of the Regent's death had depressed the garrison that the place surrendered. Rajaram's death, which occurred after he was driven back by Zulfikar Khan from Jalna which the Regent had plundered and burnt, had little effect on the war. His son Shivaji succeeded him under the Regency of the ardent Tara Bai without any hitch and Aurangzeb too went on with his plan. In the course of the next four or five years Parali, Panhalla, Vishalgad, Sinhagad, Raigad, Torna[2] and other forts were taken by the Mughals. Many of the sieges were long and bloody and various expedients and stratagems were employed by both parties in the conduct of them. Thus by 1704 Aurangzeb had taken the chief forts of the Marathas but he was further than ever from the conquest of the Maratha people. Tara Bai, the able queen regent, had inherited the military talents of her father, Hambirrao Mohite, and possessed enough energy to go from camp to camp encouraging her officers, planning campaigns, organising victories. In a short time the Maratha counter-offensive directed by her clear vision and unerring judgment began to be more effective and threatened the very heart of the Mughal Empire. Nor was any serious resistance forthcoming from the invaded provinces. Feeble garrisons had been left behind and Aurangzeb had disarmed the land-owners to prevent rebellions in his rear. In the absence of any organised opposition Maratha Subhedars and Kamavisdars were to be found everywhere.[3]

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[98] Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 362.

[99] Scott: *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 97.

[1] Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, pp. 690-91.

[2] Scott: *History of the Deccan*, p. 110.

In 1705 two Maratha armies simultaneously crossed the Narmada. The one under Nemaji Shinde ravaged central India as far as Serouj and the other led by Khanderao Dabhade, after annihilating a big army of Mahomed Beg Khan[4] plundered Gujrat as far as Ahmedabad and threatened the whole of that viceroyalty.

These continual disasters broke the spirit of the Mughal soldiery. Twenty years of incessant war had worn them out and they could be brought out to face the Maratha horse, only if led by Zulfikar Khan. Repeated defeats had adversely affected their moral while on the side of the Marathas there was confidence born of success. They were becoming bolder and bolder every day. So great had become their contempt for the aged Emperor that in mock imitation of the Muslim practice the Maratha captains[5] used to offer prayers every Friday to heaven to prolong indefinitely the life of the Emperor who opposed them so feebly. At last on the representations[6] of the officers negotiations were opened with Dhanaji Jadhav but mistrusting the good faith of his son Kambaksha and thinking that the negotiations were a screen for his intended treachery the Emperor recalled his envoys. Thus leaving the Maratha country, Aurangzeb devoted his last days to the conquest of Wakinkera, the fortified capital of the Berad chief,[7] Pirya Naik (1706).

[3] Kincaid and Parasnis, p. 180.

[4] Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, pp. 374-377.

[5] Kincaid and Parasnis, p. 181. See also Scott's *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 112.

[6] Kambaksha was thinking of having an independent kingdom for himself at Bijapur and as it was possible with the goodwill of the Marathas he took interest in these negotiations. See Sardesai, *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 708.

[7] For details of the gallantry and other qualities of the Berad people, and a description of their clan and their country, see Meadows Taylor: *Story of my Life*, pp. 144, 210-213. Also Bombay Gazetteer XXI, p. 163, and XXIII, p. 91. The strength of Wakinkera lay not so much in its natural position or artificial defences as in the courage and the number of its garrison, the deadly accuracy of their musketry fire and its ample supply

These Berads had of late won repeated victories over the regular troops of the Mughal Empire and had been a constant source of trouble to Aurangzeb. This was a welcome move for the Marathas. Tara Bai at once ordered Dhanaji to thwart the besiegers and while the Berad chief, Pirya Naik, held the Emperor at bay for several months before Wakinkera, the Marathas retook one by one all their forts. Thus was Aurangzeb robbed of the valuable fruits of his recent campaign. The Marathas now appeared to support their Berad allies and first removing by a daring feat their families which many generals had kept there for protection while their own strongholds were being captured, they halted in the neighbourhood and made frequent attacks on the Mughals. The Marathas gave no decisive battle but retreated from the field every evening and the Imperialists suffered much loss and their hearts were shaken.[8] At last mad with rage and shame Aurangzeb summoned his ablest generals from all quarters and the Berads were finally made to evacuate Wakinkera. Pirya Naik escaped and Zulfikar Khan got only the empty fortress. The taking of Wakinkera was the last success of the Grand Army and the success was hardly less ignominious than a defeat. It required the Emperor's presence, the efforts of his first-class generals, and a siege of several months to subdue it. As Sarkar remarks, " It supplies the most graphic illustration of the utter decline and weakness of the great State which Akbar had founded and Shah Jehan had carried to the highest pitch of wealth and splendour." [9] Pirya Naik's escape coming close on the loss of the Maratha forts, the capture of which had cost him so many precious lives, preyed on Aurangzeb's mind. He fell seriously ill and though recovered he knew that he had been beaten to his knees. He no longer hoped to conquer Maharashtra (December 1706) and anxiety regarding the safety of his army possessed his troubled soul. His one desire now was to withdraw safely his army and himself from the land of the Devils.

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of guns, rockets and artillery munitions. In addition to the famous Berad fort musketeers, Pirya had engaged some four thousand active cavalry both Hindu and Muhammedan including many Sayyids of the Deccan (to the immense abhorrence of the pious Aurangzeb). Refer to Sarkar, Vol. V, p. 223.

[8] Sarkar, Vol. V, p. 226.

[9] *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. V, p. 234.

The retreat to Ahmednagar was the last military operation of Aurangzeb. Seeing that the dispirited and demoralised Grand Army was about to fall back the Marathas drew closer round it to destroy it before it reached a place of safety. "At times," says Elphinstone, "they plundered up to the very skirts of the camp, intercepted the supplies, carried off the cattle, cut up the foragers, insulted the pickets and made it impossible for anyone to show his head out of the lines without a powerful escort. If any ordinary detachment was sent to check them they repelled or destroyed it. If a great effort was made, they vanished; and perhaps did not again appear till they had plundered some distant town and left time for their pursuers to weary themselves by forced marches in a wrong direction."[10] The retreat under these conditions soon became a rout. "All hurried on in disorder and dejection, deafened with the incessant firing kept up by the marksmen, alarmed by the shouts and charges of the lancers and every moment expecting a general attack to complete their dispersion and destruction."[11] Such indeed was the fate of the rear-guard in charge of Hamid-Uddin Khan. Its commanders were either killed or held to ransom and the Emperor's own baggage train was taken. If Dhanaji Jadhav had pressed his success he might have easily captured Aurangzeb himself. This escape was considered so lucky that it was the subject of pious exultation to the Muslim historians that the Emperor himself escaped from falling into the hands of his enemy whom he had so much despised.

At last the war-weary, care-worn and woe-begone Aurangzeb found a kindly asylum in the walls of Ahmednagar—Ahmednagar from whence he had marched on his conquests in all the Imperial military splendour twenty years before, full of arrogant confidence in his coming achievement. The same city now received him back under entirely tragic circumstances with his hopes shattered, his treasury empty and with his enemies close on his heels. The Grand Army was now a thing of the past, a painful memory and for a time it appeared that even Ahmednagar could not long protect him. The harassed and broken-hearted octagenarian knew that he was a defeated man and his spirit, indomitable as it was, began at length to fail him under the accumulated burden of anxiety and disease. On reaching Ahmednagar he had the premonition that the end of his journey was approaching and he quickly prepared to face it. From his last most pathetic letters we see how much the heroic old man suffered mentally from consciousness of the total failure of his ambitions in this world and the mental terror of that to come. The remembrance of the fate of Shah Jehan haunted him like a malignant apparition and his last days were clouded by fears of a like fate at the hands of his sons.[12] He was thus reaping the full harvest of his obstinacy and short-sighted bigotry when death saved the pitiable Emperor from further worries and agonies of his earthly existence in February 1707. The brave Maratha people had beaten back the invader from the North and all was safe in Maharashtra to the eternal glory of the Marathas.

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[10] Elphinstone, p. 653.
[11] *Ibid*, pp. 653-54.

The Tendencies in the Maratha Society

During the period of the death of Shivaji the Great and the release of Shahu (1680-1707) the Maratha State had to face a crisis of first-class magnitude and these memorable years of anxious tribulations were characterised as we have seen above by the unparalleled and surprising outburst of the latent martial spirit of the Maratha people. In 1681 on the occasion of the flight of Prince Akbar to the court of the Maratha King, Sambhaji, Aurangzeb set forth on his life's mission in grim determination and with mature experience at once to destroy the Shia states of Bijapur and Golkonda, to exterminate the infidel Marathas and to bring his rebellious son back to allegiance and hurled the concentrated strength of his Empire on the Deccan. The Deccanis were now caught for nearly one generation in the throes of an exterminating war, the effects of which left indelible marks on the future polity of the Marathas. The Grand Army backed up by the vast resources of Hindustan in men and money and led by the august Emperor himself

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[12] So much was the Emperor obsessed with the idea of his sons' designs to seize on the government while he was yet alive that when a letter from Prince Azam was read to him entreating permission to come to Ahmednagar on the grounds of the Gujrat climate being unsuitable to his health he abruptly remarked, "That is exactly the pretext I used to Shah Jehan in his illness." He also added that "No air was so unwholesome as the fumes of ambition." See Elphinstone, p. 654.

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drenched Deccan in blood, rendered peaceful pursuit of the daily avocations of life impossible for the entire populace, conquered and annexed the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkonda, captured and beheaded one Maratha King and sent another on his travels to Jinji, a penniless wanderer, and in general no effort was spared to see that the grandiose plan of the puritan Emperor was a success. In his senile obstinacy and blinded by one passion and one only, with heroic fortitude, too, such as would have done credit to a courageous youth and as would rarely fail to excite our admiration and exact our pity, Aurangzeb left nothing undone to achieve his ends. He pressed into his service such agents as cunning and fraud, encouraged internal dissensions in the enemy ranks, and always utilised to the full the weakness of Maratha character. Nothing was left to chance; the master's watchful eye was on everything and everybody lest they should turn traitors to his cause; he directed every operation in person and did not mind the trifling inconvenience of the rigours of the camp life; he would not even brook any suggestion of an honourable peace with the enemy or of return home; all his courtiers and generals became heartily sick of the ever-lengthening and never-ending weary war. But through all the varying fortunes of the war Aurangzeb pathetically clung to his original ideal and indeed would have been, as on former more successful occasions, quite ready in his own way to kneel down in all devoutness to offer his grateful prayers to his Allah, had He been more kind to him in his present undertaking. Allah, however, though propitiated by the reimposition of Zazia on the Deccan Hindus, forsook this once his favourite child and ranged himself, as Allah invariably does in such cases, on the superior military side of the infidels. Whatever Aurangzeb might do, however hard he might strain every nerve, to stop the rising tide of the Maratha success, in spite of all his best efforts to counter the rot that was spreading in his Empire his Deccan campaign was a colossal failure. The consciousness of this failure of his cherished dream, the ultimate triumph of the unworthy Kafirs, and the menacing shadows that were being cast beforehand by the coming events, the natural results of the impending war of succession between his sons, the shattered finances of the Empire, the demoralised army and a degenerate nobility too terrible to contemplate without sending a painful shudder through his exhausted frame, contributed to the gloom and mental agony of the last days of the pathetic Aurangzeb and at last his disappointed and sorely troubled spirit flew to its eternal rest at Ahmednagar in February 1707. No curtain ever dropped on a more tragic end.

The War of Independence left lasting impression on the character of the Maratha People and the Maratha State. This war meant at first a great disaster for the infant Maratha Kingdom which was at this time going to rack and ruin owing to the neglect of Sambhaji, their self-indulgent Roi Faineant. Profiting by the inactivity of the Maratha King and the confusion of the Maratha State, Aurangzeb's armies carried everything before them and the Marathas were everywhere driven to the shelter of their mountain forts. To crown all, an enterprising Mughal officer captured Sambhaji who in fancied security was busy at Sangameshwar with his untimely and questionable enjoyments. Sambhaji was made to pay dearly with his life both for his enjoyments and for his faith and it appeared for a time that the Maratha State would fall never to rise again. The more so because the Emperor had now his victorious young son in his hands and Rajaram the Regent had been expelled from the country.

The Marathas had no longer a leader of Shivaji the Great's capacity to lead them to the attack but the time when a leader was essential was over. The national spirit called into existence for the first time in their history remained and through failure and annihilation of their state, it yet continued to rouse them to an heroic endeavour to rear up in the not distant future, not merely a National State but also an all-India Empire. They soon recovered from the stunning blow. Adversity drew out all their latent qualities, the cruel murder of the royal martyr inflamed their passions, the memory of the Great King and his noble example sustained their spirit of resistance and to their desire to avenge Sambhaji they added an equal determination to defend their country. It therefore became a people's war. Shivaji's heroic nation was now up in arms and gave such a good account of itself and its creator that the harassed and demoralised remnant of the Grand Army had to retreat to Ahmednagar pursued by the terrible warriors of the Deccan. Thus indeed the danger to their liberty was averted and the Maratha State was reborn. Aurangzeb was beaten at his own game and the War of Independence was brought to a happy close but not before it had left everlasting marks on the character of the victors.

The absence of any regular government during the progress of the war and the dire necessity of the times had made for relaxation of all discipline and the selfish individual tendencies, which were inherent in the character of the mediaeval Maratha, returned. Quarrels and bitter jealousies broke out once more among the Marathas of a generation which had known no discipline or control of any sort. The devastating war rendered many homeless and deprived them of any other means of subsistence except pillage and plunder. These predatory instincts of the people which formed at first a means of mere existence, were further roused and whetted by the plundering raids against the Mughal country which were undertaken on an extensive scale as an offensive military tactics. During the unsettled conditions which obtained in Maharashtra it became a matter of political expediency to attach self-interest to patriotism and military leaders were assigned jahagirs in the enemy territory as well as in the "Swarajya". The long continuance of the War of Independence gave these tendencies, viz. personal quarrels and mutual jealousies, predatory habits, and craving for jahagirs enough time to sink deep in the Maratha character and take root in the already not unfavourable ground. Events in the next reign tended to solidify them into marked traits of the people and though other high principles always kept them under check they were never successfully uprooted to the last. No ideals, however noble, could ever again smother these tendencies and they remained the joint moulders of the future history of the Marathas. These propensities, therefore, were the legacy of Aurangzeb to Maharashtra who, even in his discomfiture, seemed to leave behind other enemies for the Marathas more subtle in their working, more malignant in their resistance, more deadly in their success. What results followed from these tendencies we shall see in the next chapter.

PART II

CHAPTER VI

THE BEGINNING OF THE EMPIRE

IN the following review of Shahu's long reign we must fix our attention on three most important points, viz. (i) how the selfish individual tendencies noticed in the preceding chapter worked upon by the inveterate enemy of the Maratha State, the Nizam culminated in a long and suicidal civil war, (ii) how because of the strong anti-national and anti-state propensities of the Maratha national character weak Shahu, not being a capable ruler himself, was forced to rely more and more upon the Bhat family and how, therefore, the Peshwas gradually came to possess supreme power in the Maratha State and finally (iii) how and under what circumstances owing to the genius of Baji Rao I the Maratha State launched itself upon a career of wholesale conquest and territorial expansion, giving rise to the Maratha Empire and bringing in its train the peculiar constitutional development of the Monarchy into what for want of an exact term we may style "Confederacy" first under the control of Shahu and then later on after his death under the leadership of his Chief Minister, the Peshwa.

Shahu:

Difficulties of Shahu: The Civil War in Maharashtra

Aurangzeb's death left Maharashtra in a disorderly state. Tara Bai, the Regent of her son Shivaji II, followed her husband's example and assigned different parts of the Deccan to her commanders without trying to control their activities. Those several chiefs usually took their own line and consulted their own interests but never showed any slackness in harassing the Mughals on all sides.[1] Thus Parsoji Bhonsle had East Berar

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[1] Rajwade: *M. I. Sadhane*, Vol. II, p. 5.

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as far as Nagpur; Chimnaji Damodar, South Berar; Kath Singh Kadam Rao, Khandesh; Khanderao Dabhade, Gujrat; Kanhoji Angre, Konkan; Udaji Chavan, Miraj; Hindurao Ghorpade, the Karnatic; Damaji Thorat, Varshipagaon; Dhanaji Jadhav, North Painghat and Haibat Rao Nimbalkar, South Painghat. While incessant struggles were going on between these and the Mughal commanders, the three surviving sons of Aurangzeb were preparing to fight each other for the throne. Prince Azim Shah, being nearest to the grand army,[2] assumed the command of the Deccan army and marched to the north to contend for the throne with his brother Sultan Muazam who was advancing from Lahore. Shahu continued his captivity in the camp of Azim Shah and that prince carried him, while on his march to Hindustan, to a considerable distance beyond the Narmada. As the best means of diverting the attention of the Marathas from harassing the Mughuls and keeping them busy with their domestic affairs the astute general, Zulfikar Khan, suggested the release of Shahu. This master stroke of policy was well calculated to create a division among the Marathas as the presence of Shahu, the legitimate king in Maharashtra was sure to start a civil war between him and the ambitious Tara Bai. On this advice Azam Shah released Shahu in May 1707[3] on the condition that he should rule as a feudatory to Azam Shah and leave behind him his mother, wives, and half-brother as hostages. In return Azam Shah granted him the Chauth and Sardeshmukhi of the six Subhas of the Deccan and the provinces of Gondwana, Gujrat and Tanjore in addition to his paternal kingdom during good behaviour.[4] With this Imperial grant and escorted by a slender following Shahu made his way into Maharashtra.

Thus did Shahu regain his liberty after a captivity of 18 years. He had been captured along with his mother Yesubai and others of the Royal family in November 1689 when Raigad, the Maratha Capital, surrendered to Zulfikar Khan. Though the bitterest enemy of the Marathas, Aurangzeb more out of political reasons than regard for humane considerations never ill-treated Shahu (or interfered with his religion). Perhaps the

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[2] G. Duff: *History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, p. 349.

[3] Shahu was released at Dohra near Nemawar to the north of the Narmada. See Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 395. See also Sardesai: *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 743.

[4] Kincaid and Parasnis: *History of the Maratha People*, p. 188.

Emperor had learnt the lesson of Sambhaji's example and preferred to keep Shahu a prisoner to be used as a pawn in any future political exigency that might arise in the Deccan. The Emperor brought him up as if he was his own grandson owing to the good offices of his daughter Zinat-un-Nisa who showered all her tender care and love on the boy. When Shahu came of age, he was married to two beautiful brides with pomp and grandeur due to his rank.[5] On two former occasions Aurangzeb had considered his release in order to create divisions amongst the Maratha ranks and thus to weaken them. But twice did the plan fail on account of the Emperor's suspicious nature[6] and Shahu had to remain a prisoner in the camp till he was released by Azim Shah as noted above.

Shahu had inherited the gentleness and prudence of his good mother Yesubai rather than the savage rashness of his father. He had now to make good his claim to the throne and it was a difficult thing to do in view of the fact that the power of the Maratha State was in the hands of Tara Bai and in the beginning he had no followers from the ranks of the old Ministers or Military Nobles. However his progress through the country accompanied by sympathetic attention to the people's grievances and his conciliatory attitude towards the Maratha Chieftains which stood in perfect contrast to the vindictive harshness of his father, soon brought him many loyal adherents. The free-booter Mohan Singh Ambu Pande who had built himself a fort and ravaged the country from Surat to Burhanpur,[7] his own father-in-law Rustam Rao Sujan Singh,[8] the chief of Lambhane south of the Tapti and Parsoji Bhonsle[9] were the earliest among those who espoused his cause. At Lambhane Shahu got additional support from such important personages as Haibat Rao Nimbalkar, Nemaji Shinde and Chimnaji Damodar and had

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[5] Chitnis: *Thorle Shahu Maharaj Yanche Charitra,* pp. 3-6.

[6] Sarkar: *History of Aurangzeb.* Vol. V, p. 206-207.

[7] Elliot & Dawson, Vol. VII, p. 395.

[8] He was created a Sapt Hazari for his services. See Rajwade, Vol. XX, Document No. 60.

[9] Of all the Maratha Chieftains who stood by Shahu at this time of his need Parsoji rendered the most signal services. Tara Bai had questioned the genuineness of Shahu's descent and Parsoji eating publicly of the same plate with Shahu dispelled all popular doubts about Shahu being an imposter and not the real son of Sambhaji. Thus Parsoji's action proved to the people Shahu's legitimacy beyond a shadow of doubt and therefore his claim to the throne could not be questioned. Nagpurkar Bhonslyanchi Bakhar, p. 20.

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sufficiently strengthened his position and endeared his cause to the people.[10] From Lambhane Shahu marched to Ahmednagar[11] where he prepared for the coming struggle with Tara Bai and thence to Nagar. Here he cautiously decided to watch the course of affairs and though conscious of his strength did not cross the Bhima until he was sure of his success.

Shahu's advent into Maharashtra embittered Tara Bai's feelings and she resolved to offer a stubborn resistance. Rightly or wrongly her convictions were that Shivaji II, Rajaram's son, was the real heir to the throne and not Shahu, Sambhaji's son.[12] She assembled all the high officers of the state, viz. Parashram Trimbak, Pratinidhi; Ramchandra Pant, Amatya; Shankaraji, Sachiv; Nilkanth Moreshwar Pingle, Peshwa; Dhanaji Jadhav, Senapati; Khando Ballal, Chitnis; and others and urged them to take an oath on boiled rice and milk that they would remain true to the cause of her son.[13] The situation was indeed delicate for the Maratha Nobles. Many took the oath but some wavered and Dhanaji Jadhav and Khando Ballal promised to join her only in case Shahu was an imposter. This disagreement proved ultimately advantageous to Shahu for the trustworthy agents that both parties now sent to ascertain the truth about him, Bapu Bhonsle,[14] Parsoji's brother by Tara Bai and Balaji Vishwanath by Dhanaji Jadhav, were quite convinced that Shahu was no imposter. Thus Dhanaji was persuaded to support Shahu's cause and he remained aloof in the battle of Khed. The Pratinidhi, who had to fight single-handed on behalf of Tara Bai, was badly beaten and fled to Satara.[15] Khed shattered the hopes of Tara Bai and undermined her position. Her cause had been weakened by the mutual ill-will amongst her followers like Parshram Pant Pratinidhi and Ramchandra Pant Amatya [16] and by her own blind prejudices and vindictive and arrogant nature. On the contrary Shahu conducted himself with dignity and tact. In the final victory that he secured over his rival, Tara Bai, his personality was as much a factor as the rest of the circumstances. After the flight of the Pratinidhi, Dhanaji openly joined Shahu and his desertion gave the signal for that of many others, chief among whom were Khando Ballal,[17] Chitnis, and Bahiro Pant Pingle, brother of Nilkanth Pingle, Tara Bai's Peshwa.[18] At this stage the death [19] of Shankaraji Narayan, Sachiv, unexpectedly placed all the fortresses under him in Shahu's hands and thus the whole country north of the Nira came in his possession. The finishing touch to these acquisitions was given when Chandanwandan opened its gates and his conquest of the Northern Maharashtra was completed. Shahu then made up his mind to take Satara, the seat of Tara Bai's Government and as the Pratinidhi refused to surrender it he laid siege to it. But Shaikh Mira, a Muslim Officer, who commanded under the Pratinidhi, confined him and surrendered the fort. Satara brought to a happy termination what had been begun at Lambhani under difficult circumstances and continued at Khed. It proclaimed the revival of the Maratha Kingdom under the grandson of Shivaji the Great.

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[10] Sardesai: *M. Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 3.

[11] Shahu wanted to use Ahmednagar both as the seat of his power and base of his operations; but the Mughals were unwilling to part with one of their strongest outposts in the Deccan and Shahu was not inclined to wrest it from them by superior force. See Sardesai, *M. R.*, Vol. I, p. 4. On the other hand to placate them Shahu paid a visit to the tomb of Aurangzeb at Khuldabad. See Elliot & Dawson, Vol. VII, p. 395. On his way there the headman of Parad one Lokhande who held the village in Muslim interest opened fire on Shahu's army and in the skirmish that followed the headman was killed and the fort was stormed. The widow with her son then threw herself on the protection of the king. Because this was his first victory in Maharashtra he commemorated the occasion by giving the name of Fateh Singh to the baby. He adopted Lokhande's son and gave him his own surname and the Fief of Akkalkot. Thus Fateh Singh Bhonsle became the ancestor of the well-known Rajas of Akkalkot. See *Life of Shahu the Elder*, pp. 15-16.

[12] In a letter to Som Naik, Desai of Setwad, dated 17th September 1707, she says, "This kingdom has been won by the exertion of Shivaji the Great of sacred memory but Rajashri Sambhaji Raja lost it. Rajaram then ascended the throne and he recovered the throne by his own prowess. Secondly, Shivaji the Great of sacred memory wanted to leave the kingdom to Rajaram." On these grounds she unequivocally rejects the claim of Shahu to the throne. See Sardesai, *M. R.*, Vol. I, pp. 5-6.

[13] *Life of Shahu the Elder*, pp. 13-14; Also *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 7.

[14] *The Chronicle of the Bhonsles of Nagpur*, p. 20.

Tara Bai retired beyond the Krishna leaving Shahu master of all the territory in the north. Thinking, now that her Capital had fallen, that her submission was a question of time and being also by nature affectionate, Shahu did not want to push matters against his aunt to the extreme. He therefore left Tara Bai alone and formally seated himself on the throne (January 1708).

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[15] *Life of Shahu the Elder*, pp. 16-17.

[16] Ramchandra was afterwards foolishly confined by Tara Bai in the fortress of Vasantgad and in retaliation he conspired against her with the leading Maratha chiefs and urged them to go over to Shahu. *History of the Chiefs of Ichalkaranji* (Marathi), p. 22.

[17] *Life of Shahu the Elder*, p. 16.

[18] Rajwade, Vol. XV, Document 360.

[19] Haunted by the gloomy thought that he had proved a traitor to the rightful heir Shahu, he swallowed diamond dust and put an end to his life. See Rajwade, Vol. XV, Document 289.

The new king next proceeded to make fresh appointments to the various Ministerial Offices nor did he forget, in the hour of his glory, those to whom he owed his success. Parsoji Bhonsle was given the title of Sena-Sahib-Subah and a sumptuous jahagir to maintain his rank and ever afterwards Shahu cherished a fondness for him and his house.[20]

The most difficult problem that confronted Shahu after his coronation was how to square his own interests with those of Tara Bai; she had been defeated but not crushed. If Shahu had resumed the campaign with the same vigour as he had begun it she would have been easily brought to her knees.[21] But he was by temperament incapable of any stern action however necessary or of sustained exertion in any cause, however noble. This natural want of energy on the part of the king was reinforced by the interested advice of persons like Khanderao Dabhade to follow a conciliatory policy towards his uncle's family. Accordingly Shahu seriously thought of ceding the whole country to the south of Warna to Tara Bai's son and even made overtures to that effect to her in 1708.[22] If she had consented the fatal civil war that convulsed Maharashtra for several years till 1731, would have ended at this time and the Marathas would have been in a better position to meet the machinations of their neighbour, the Nizam of Hyderabad. Tara Bai was short-sighted and her implacable hostility to Shahu frustrated his well-meaning attempts at conciliation.

Undaunted by her recent reverses she formed new plans to renew the contest. She released Ramchandra Pant from Vasantgad and won him over again to her side by expressing deep regret for the past and professing friendship for the future.[23] She also secured the support of the Savants [24] of Wadi, Kanhoji Angre and the powerful Sirdar Sidhoji Hindu Rao and put Rangna in a condition to stand a long siege. These warlike preparations forced Shahu's hands and he embarked upon a campaign against her in February 1708.[25]

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[20] Sardesai: *M. Riyasat* (Madhya Vibhag), Vol. I, p. 13.

[21] *Ibid*, p. 14.

[22] Rajwade, Vol. XV, Document 282.

[23] *History of the Chiefs of Ichalkaranji* (*Marathi*). p. 22.

[24] Rajwade: *M. I. Sadhane*, Vol. VIII, Document 62.

The promised help from Sawant and Angre did not arrive, the former actually joining Shahu,[26] and Tara Bai after standing a siege of three months had to run away from Rangna as the fort came to the verge of surrender. Secret correspondence had been opened with Dhanaji Jadhav, Khando Ballal and others with a view to persuade them to desert Shahu or prevail upon him to raise the siege.[27] Dhanaji and his colleagues were averse from selfish motives to the idea of entirely crushing Tara Bai for in that case Shahu would be unduly powerful and they would not then get a chance to serve their own interests at his cost. These chieftains were more interested in increasing their own Jahagirs than in fighting the battles of their king and this they could hope to do so long as the civil war continued and their services were needed. Hence Dhanaji pleaded strongly in favour of raising the siege and in spite of the dissentient voice of Parsoji Bhonsle Shahu ordered the siege operation to be stopped and returned to Panhala (June 1708) placing Nilo Ballal (brother of the Chitnis) in charge of the newly conquered territory. Thus ended the campaign in partial success; it brought some addition of territory to Shahu but Tara Bai remained uncrushed. The irresolution of his character and the leniency that characterised all his dealings were to be seen on this occasion as on others. When Shahu withdrew from Rangna he had an intention of resuming the siege after the rains. But not receiving the help for which he had applied to Governor of Bombay, Sir Nicholas Waite,[28] and not feeling sure of the loyalty of the Senapati, Dhanaji's son Chandrasen[29] Shahu thought it prudent to abandon to Tara Bai the whole country to the south of the Warna and withdrew his troops from those parts towards the end of the year 1708.[30]

Tara Bai was not slow to profit by this changed attitude of Shahu. Returning from Malwan she took possession of Vishalgad[31] and punished the Sawant of Wadi for his last betrayal. Thus she established her power over the territory south of Warna without injuring the interests of Shahu and acting on the wise advice of Ramchandra Pant desisted from transgressing the line of the Warna. She fixed her headquarters at Kolhapur and was not molested by Shahu. It even appeared that hostilities would now subside between the two rivals.

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[25] Sardesai, *M. Riyasat* (Madhya Vibhag), Vol. I, p. 15.

[26] Rajwade: *M. L. Sadhane*, Vol. III, Documents 64-67.

[27] Sardesai: *M. Riyasat* (M. V.), Vol. I, p. 16.

[28] Grant Duff: *History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, p. 359.

[29] Dhanaji Jadhav died in the middle of the year 1708 and his son Chandrasen succeeded to the office of Senapati. His mind wavered between Shahu and Tara Bai. Sardesai: *M. Riyasat* (M.V.), Vol. I, p. 20.

[30] *Ibid*, p. 20.

The parties would have probably lived in peace but for the arrival of Bahadur Shah in the Deccan towards the end of the year 1708. In 1707 Prince Muazzam had defeated and killed Azam Shah in the battle of Jajan[32] and had ascended the throne under the title of Bahadur Shah. Shahu had paid his homage to the new Emperor and in return Bahadur Shah confirmed him in his possessions and elevated him to the Mansab of ten thousand.[33] Soon after his accession Bahadur Shah heard that Kambaksh had assumed the signs of sovereignty.[34] Bahadur Shah thereupon marched into the Deccan against Kambaksh[35] and in the contest the Emperor was successful with the help that Shahu,[36] grateful for the kind treatment meted out to him in the Imperial camp and eager to enlist the Emperor's sympathies on his side, despatched to him under one of his renowned Sirdar, Nemaji Shinde.[37] In this battle Kambaksh was taken prisoner and expired immediately of his wounds.[38] Shahu took advantage of this victory in which the Marathas had rendered signal services to ask for the grant of "the Sardeshmukhi" and the Chouth of the six subhashs of the Deccan on the condition of restoring prosperity to the ruined land."[39]

The Emperor, who had no hesitation in granting the prayer, indeed wrote the Royal Firman and was on the point of sending the same when the arrival of Tara Bai's agent on the scene upset the whole plan. Owing to the jealousy between Zulfikar Khan and Munim Khan, Tara Bai's envoy received support from the latter while Shahu's cause was backed up by Zulfikar Khan. "A great contention arose upon the matter between the two Ministers"[40] and the Emperor who was reluctant to displease either of his ministers, accepted in the end Munim Khan's suggestion in the matter.

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[31] *History of the Chief of Ichalkaranji* (Marathi), p. 23.

[32] Irvine: *Later Mughuls*, Vol. I, pp. 22-32.

[33] Rajwade: *M. I. Sadhane*, Vol. VIII, Documents 55-57.

[34] Irvine: *Later Mughuls*, Vol. I, pp. 45-48.

[35] Kambaksh wrote a provokingly defiant reply to a kind letter of Bahadur Shah asking him to acknowledge himself as his overlord for the two subhahs of Bijapur and Golkonda which Bahadur Shah was prepared to hand over to Kambaksh. See Elliot & Dawson, Vol. VII, p. 406.

[36] On his way Shahu was summoned to the Emperor's presence to render Military service as vassal. See Rajwade: *M. I. Sadhane*, Vol. VIII, Document 56.

[37] Elliot & Dawson, Vol. VII, p. 408.

[38] Irvine: *Later Mughuls*, Vol. I, p. 62.

[39] Elliot & Dawson, Vol. VII, p. 408.

The Maratha envoys were told that Shahu and Tara Bai should fight their quarrel and the Sardeshmukhi rights would be granted to the one who would emerge successful.[41] Thus "the orders about the Sardeshmukhi remained in-operative"[42] and the Emperor crossed the Narmada in December 1709 and left for the north leaving this question unsolved.[43]

This decision of Bahadur Shah rekindled the flickering flame of the civil war between Shahu and Tara Bai and each party bent upon establishing its own claim, now made preparations to fight to a finish. The condition of Maharashtra was already confused enough and this civil war made confusion worse confounded. Law and order could not, therefore, be restored till 1731 when the Warna treaty settled these domestic differences once for all. In the meanwhile both parties eagerly courted the help of the avaricious and self-seeking Sirdars and had to offer big jahagirs as the price. Conscious of their importance, the partisans of Shahu or Tara Bai found it a profitable game to sell their services for a consideration irrespective of any high motive. The slightest dissatisfaction with the present master was enough to induce some chieftains to transfer allegiance to another master whether Maratha or Muslim and desertions became the rule of the day. Others took advantage of this civil anarchy to plunder all and sundry, and Maharashtra became honey-combed with unruly chiefs like Damaji Thorat, Krishnarao Khataokar, Udaji Chavan and others.[44] During all these days of domestic feuds Shahu's position became precarious and but for the able and devoted services of Balaji Vishwanath, the weak Shahu could not have secured his position as the lawful king of the Marathas so easily or so soon.

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[40] *Ibid*, p. 409.
[41] Sardesai: *M. Riyasat* (M. Vibhag), Vol. I, p. 24.
[42] Elliot & Dawson, Vol. VII, p. 409.
[43] Irvine: *Later Mughuls*, Vol. I, p. 67.
[44] Rajwade, Vol. III, Document 343.

The difficulties of Shahu's situation provided an excellent opportunity to the clever Chitpavan Brahmin from Konkan to show his talents. He brought order to the troubled Maratha State and himself rose, in a slow yet inevitable manner, to the highest position in the State. He justified the confidence that Shahu in his need reposed in him and thus, as Mr. Sinha remarks, the first of the house of the Peshwas, was the first and the best servant of the House of Bhonsles.[45]

Balaji Vishwanath and his Work

Balaji had a brilliant career both as a revenue agent of Dhanaji Jadhav and a Military leader and had acquired varied experience about men and affairs of the times before Shahu called him to his side. He was then not a dark horse whom Shahu was backing. At the time of Shahu's entry into Maharashtra Balaji was a trusted lieutenant of Dhanaji Jadhav and as the Sar-Subhedar of Daulatabad was in charge of the collection of the annual Chouth. At this time he was sent, as we have seen above, to verify whether Shahu was an imposter and being satisfied about the identity of Shahu he persuaded Dhanaji to join him. Dhanaji, his master, was actuated by selfish motives in common with other Sirdars and was half-hearted in his support. But Balaji never faltered in his loyalty to Shahu, perhaps because the shrewd Chitpavan clearly saw that he could realise his ambitions better by sticking to the weaker side of Shahu. His firm adherence might have, in its origin, been the result of his calculated diplomacy but once he espoused his cause he stood by him through thick and thin to his own eternal credit and to the benefit of the country. On the occasion of his coronation Balaji was appointed Mutalig to the Amatya Amburao Hanmante. After Dhanaji's death (1708) he was created[46] the Senakarte or the organizer of armies—an appointment which brought him the jealousy of Chandrasen Jadhav,[47] who succeeded to the office of Senapati. Shortly after this Maharashtra was plunged into the suicidal civil war owing to the decision of Bahadur Shah referred to above. The prevailing anarchy and the weakness of Monarchy gave a golden opportunity to the unpatriotic Sirdars to defy the legitimate authority of their King and set up their virtual independence. Two years of warfare (1708-10) did not see Shahu master of more than 25 miles of territory round Satara. The rest of the country was held either by Tara Bai or the Predatory Sirdars. Such were Damaji Thorat in Supa, Shahaji Nimbalkar in Faltan, Udaji Chavan in Miraj, Khem Savant in South Konkan, and Kanhoji Angre in North Konkan. Krishnarao Khataokar held the whole country north of the Krishna in the nominal interests of the Mughuls.[48]

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[45] *Rise of the Peshwas*—Introduction, p. xxviii.

[46] When exactly he was made the Senakarte is not definitely known. The time must have been not later than November 1708. See Sardesai: *M. Riyasat* (M. Vibhag), p. 32.

[47] Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 7; Introductory II.

Two of these free-booters Damaji and Krishnarao played the greatest mischief and established a veritable reign of terror in Maharashtra in those days. The newly appointed Senakarte was therefore deputed by Shahu (about the year 1710) against Damaji Thorat. Damaji, however, treacherously seized Balaji and held him to ransom which Shahu paid and effected his release.[49] Thus the first attempt of Balaji to evolve order out of domestic chaos ended in failure. It was now that the jealousy and enmity between Chandrasen Jadhav and Balaji came to a head and Chandrasen deserted Shahu's cause. On Balaji's failure Shahu ordered his Senapati Chandrasen Jadhav to lead an expedition against the truculent freebooter and Balaji went with him as his revenue Secretary[50] specially charged with the delicate duty of spying over the movements of Chandrasen whose sympathies on his own admission[51] were from the beginning on the side of Tara Bai. This was probably due to his unconquerable jealousy of Balaji who had monopolised for some time the confidence of his father as well as the King. It is true however that this arrangement increased their enemity tenfold and on a very slight cause, arising from a trifling dispute[52] about a deer run down by one of Balaji's horsemen the suppressed enemity burst out in open violence. Shahu readily supported Balaji in this quarrel against the Senapati and thus was the Senakarte saved on this occasion from Chandrasen's wrath.[53] Already Chandrasen had been disaffected towards Shahu and now he became furious. He became so arrogant that he bluntly demanded the surrender of Balaji to him. Shahu was in a fix for the open rebellion of the Senapati might mean a disaster to the country and a crisis for himself. Yet the King was not prepared to stand any dictation from his servants and summoning Haibatrao Nimbalkar from the neighbourhood of Ahmednagar ordered him to chastise Chandrasen for his insolence. The Senapati was worsted in the battle that ensued and he openly joined Tara Bai's party.

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[48] Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 9.

[49] *Ibid*, pp. 11-13; *Life of Shahu Maharaj the Elder*, p. 36.

[50] Sardesai: *M. Riyasat* (M.V.), Vol. I, p. 36. G. Duff says Chandrasen was directed to levy the Chouth, Sardeshmukhi, etc. from the Mughal districts. See Vol. I, p. 363.

[51] His motives and activities while he was yet a servant of Shahu are clear from his letter to Shivaji II about 27 August 1711. See Sardesai: *M. Riyasat* (M.V.), Vol. I, pp. 34-35.

[52] We think Balaji was slightly wrong in his attitude when he flatly refused to surrender the offending Piraji at Chandrasen's demand. Piraji, his trooper, had exceeded decorum and violated rules of discipline when

Chandrasen's open treason was not far worse than the double-dealing of other Sirdars who were only paying a lip homage to Shahu but it rendered Shahu's position critical. There was now not a single powerful Sirdar on his side. The Sawant of Wadi, Angre, and Khanderao Dabhade had already declared for Tara Bai and sedition having been sown by Chandrasen in the ranks of Shahu's other partisans like Haibatrao Nimbalkar, Damaji Thorat, Appaji Thorat, and Santaji Pandare, a formidable conspiracy had also been formed at this time against Shahu. The extreme insecurity of Shahu's situation is fully realised when we note that Parsoji Bhonsle and Chimnaji Damodar were the only Chiefs on Shahu's side. In this crisis Balaji, with his rare genius for organisation and diplomacy came to his King's rescue. In fact these trying times revealed both the real worth of the Chitpavan Brahmin and the eagle eye of Shahu for choosing the right man for the right job. Chandrasen's treason soon led to the desertion of Haibatrao Nimbalkar and Shahu thus lost the services of both his Senapati and Sarlaskar, two of the principal officers of his army.

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he hurled his spear at Vyasrao the Brahmin in Chandrasen's service when Vyasrao refused to surrender the pursued animal. Piraji's duty was to report the matter if he considered it important to his master Balaji for action. Balaji ought to have in fairness to his chief Chandrasen, offered to punish him for this breach of discipline. Anyway, nothing could have prevented Chandrasen's treason as he was bent on picking up a quarrel with Balaji.

[53] *Life of Shahu Maharaj the Elder*, p. 28.

Consequently his military organization as well as strength[54] suffered and though he appointed (1711) Chandrasen's younger brother Santaji Jadhav to the chief command, Shahu was at his wits' end to know how to raise up new armies in the absence of adequate supply of money.[55] Seeing the king's monetary difficulty, Balaji promptly decided to borrow on his own responsibility large sums from prominent money-lenders like Mahadaji Krishna Naik and recruited an army[56] to meet the enemies of his king.

From this time onwards the aspect of affairs began to change in Shahu's favour. He had not been paralysed by the dangers of the situation, great as they were, and now recovering from his temporary depression he proceeded to deal sternly with the conspirators. He ordered Parshram Pant, the Pratinidhi,[57] to be put in chains and kept him under strict surveillance (1711). Next Balaji brought about the fall of the arch conspirator and the prime-instigator of all the mischief, Tara Bai, by an intrigue with Ramchandra Pant, to whom the tactless Tara Bai was ungrateful and for whom she now showed dislike, forgetting all his devoted services to her. Ramchandra Pant joined the party of Rajasbai and with the help of Balaji and a strong section of the Kolhapur nobles succeeded in throwing Tara Bai and her son into prison and setting up Sambhaji and Rajasbai in their place. In this way the most implacable enemy of Shahu was got rid of. Another result of this bloodless revolution was that Chandrasen Jadhav was forced to seek shelter with Nizam-ul-Mulk, who had, in the meantime, been appointed Viceroy of the Deccan.

After the overthrow of Tara Bai, Balaji crushed the power of Krishnarao Khataokar by defeating and killing him in a hard-contested action near the freebooter's stronghold of Khatao. The same year (1712) Shahu had sent Bahiropant Pingle, his Peshwa, against Kanhoji Angre who was nominally the Admiral of the Maratha Fleet,[58] but really the most powerful and independent naval chief of the west coast. In the contest between Shahu and Tara Bai he had ranged himself at first on the side of Tara Bai and in return for his support had been granted the whole of the Konkan between Bombay and Sawant Wadi. But in the disorderly times that followed he betrayed Tara Bai and profiting by the helplessness of Shahu, extended his arms and subdued some portion of Peshwa's Jahagir.[59] Hence the expedition of Bahiropant Pingle alluded to above. The Peshwa was defeated and taken prisoner and Kanhoji made ready to follow up his victory by rapid march on the capital of Shahu. This threw the king into consternation and finding Bahiropant incapable and therefore unfit for the high office of Peshwa consulted Parshram Pant Pratinidhi on the point of the appointment of his successor. Obviously in this crisis when Angre was advancing on Satara the new Peshwa was required to be an able man who would check the progress of Kanhoji. Such a man was Balaji, who, by his abilities and present achievements, was eminently fitted for the high post and Parshram Pant suggested his name.[60] Acting on the sound advice and influenced by deep sense of gratitude for all his valuable services, Shahu appointed Balaji, Peshwa in 1713. Occasion was also taken to reorganise the Ministerial posts and new appointments[61] were made on the advice of Balaji Vishwanath, the new Peshwa. All the officers, except the Senapati, were men of ability and hence, the duties of Peshwa and Senapati were discharged by the same man, viz. the Peshwa.

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[54] Shahu had only 2,000 men out of his main army which had deserted along with the Senapati. See Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 10.

[55] Sardesai, *M.R.* (M. Vibh.), Vol. I, p. 39.

[56] To pay off this debt he got from the king an assignment of Jahagir yielding 25 lakhs a year. Sinha: *Rise of the Peshwas*, p. 10.

[57] Parshram Pant was afterwards released on Balaji's recommendation in recognition of the services of his son Shripatrao against Krishnarao Khataokar and ever since remained loyal to Shahu. See *Marathi Riyasat* (M. Vibh.), Vol. I, p. 44.

Immediately after his investiture Balaji Vishwanath was ordered to suppress the pretentions of Kanhoji Angre. The Peshwa collected an army of 3,000 to 4,000 troops and proceeded towards Lohagad.[62] The astute Balaji, however, saw that to tame the lion of Konkan was not an easy task. He knew Kanhoji to be a leader of no mean ability and enterprise. An accommodation was therefore considered more desirable than the result of a protracted war with a powerful neighbour.

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[58] Toward the end of Rajaram's reign, i.e. 1698, he is mentioned as holding the office of Sarkhel (Admiral of the Maratha Fleet). See *Marathyache Armar*, p. 32.

[59] *Life of Shahu Maharaj the Elder*, p. 37.

[60] Rajwade, Vol. IV, pp. 34-35.

[61] Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 17. Sardesai: *M. Riyasat* (M.V.), Vol. I, p. 47.

[62] *Ibid.*

Balaji was successful in making a mutually advantageous peace and in pursuading Kanhoji to give up his defiant attitude and tender allegiance to Shahu. With conciliation of Angre, Shahu's position in Maharashtra became stable and his power and prestige unquestionable. Though this treaty involved the Maratha Kingdom in the conflict between Kanhoji and his enemies, the Portuguese, the Siddies and the English, it secured unity of interests in the Maratha State.

After the settlement with Angre operations were begun against Damaji Thorat and Udaji Chavan with the result that Damaji was taken prisoner in 1718 and Udaji was obliged to flee to the protection of the Nizam (1737). Thus at home Balaji's resourcefulness had through war or diplomacy triumphed over every crisis. But petty factions continued and stable government or permanent peace became impossible in Maharashtra until such time as the external circumstances once more restored the control of the Maratha State over its domestic affairs and contributed not only to its stability but its wide expansion.

Balaji in Delhi (1715-1719)

After Aurangzeb's death the affairs of the Mughul Empire languished everywhere and the quarrels of his weak successors only accelerated the decay that had already set in. Like all other Imperial provinces the Deccan Viceroyalty was also in a chaotic condition. We have already seen how Shahu had been granted by Azam Shah the right to realise the Chouth and the Sardeshmukhi from the six Subhahs of the Deccan, and how domestic quarrels had reacted on foreign politics and how the confirmation of these rights had been suspended owing to the claim advanced by Tara Bai. When Shahu established his title to be regarded as the legitimate king of the Marathas he ordered his Sirdars to ravage the Mughul territory. At this time the Imperial Court was a hotbed of intrigues and there was no knowing what might happen to the deputy Governor of the Deccan.[63] Harassed by the Marathas and abandoned by the Emperor, Daud Khan Punni (Dy. Governor) had to purchase his peace by a promise to Shahu to pay Chouth and Sardeshmukhi for the six Subhahs of the Deccan according to the agreement of the Emperor Bahadur Shah on condition that the same would be collected and paid by his own agents. In 1713[64] Nizam-ul-Mulk replaced Daud Khan in the Deccan as the Viceroy. It was the new Viceroy's ambition to rule the Deccan independently of Delhi and this he could hope to do only by getting rid of the Marathas. Hence from the very beginning of his career he determined to check the growing menace of the Maratha State. The first step was to stop the payment of Chouth as agreed to by Daud Khan Punni and then to rally round him all the disaffected Sirdars of Maharashtra.[65] Accordingly he formed a formidable array of adversaries against Shahu with himself at their head. Rambhaji Nimbalkar[66] was already on his side and to the Maratha faction at his Court he now added Chandrasen Jadhav, Sarjerao Ghadge, and Sambhaji of Kolhapur. When his plan was complete he followed the old device and told the Marathas that he could not pay the fixed contributions as he did not know who the real king was—whether Shahu or Sambhaji. His next move was to foil the attempts of Balaji who was trying to re-establish Maratha authority over Poona and its neighbourhood. He had not achieved any appreciable success in his policy when owing to the Court intrigues he was called back after a reign of a year and five months and Syed Husenali took his place in the Deccan. This happened by the end of 1714 and it upset the plans of the Nizam.[67] The change in the Deccan Viceroyalty and the regime of Syed Husenali[68] formed an important landmark in the history of the Marathas.

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[63] Scott's *Deccan*, Part IV, p. 57.

Husenali, not aware of the strength of the Marathas, resolved to put them down. But the Mughuls were harassed everywhere and it seemed as if their rule would be stamped out from the Deccan in spite of the presence of the ablest man in the Empire. The news of Husenali's discomfiture elated the Emperor and he

[64] For his previous career see Irvine: *Later Mughuls*, Vol. I, pp. 268-272.

[65] Elliot & Dawson, Vol. VII, p. 450.

[66] He later on became famous as Rao Rambha Nimbalkar. See Rajwade, Vol. XX, p. 72.

[67] Scott: *History of the Deccan*, Part IV, p. 152.

[68] For details as to who these Sayyids were and how they became the king-makers at Delhi, refer to Irvine: *Later Mughuls*, Vol. I, pp. 192-197; 202-205; 229-33; & 254-303. Scott's *Deccan*, p. 140; Elliot and Dawson, Vol. VII, pp. 432-34.

wrote urging them to make war on his own Viceroy without respite.[69] Encouraged by the jealous Emperor himself, the Marathas led by Senapati Khanderao Dabhade [70] increased their activity more than ever. When, however, Husenali was apprised of the underhand dealings of Emperor Ferokshere, he completely changed his front and opened negotiations through Shankaraji Malhar [71] for an alliance with the Marathas. After a good deal of deliberation in which the patriotic Shankaraji Malhar gave sufficient proof of his desire to forward the interests of his countrymen, a treaty was concluded in February 1718 by which Husenali agreed to the payment of the usual Chouth and Sardeshmukhi for the six Deccan Subhas. The portions of Khandesh, Gondwana, Berar, Hyderabad in Karnatak conquered by the Marathas were restored to Shahu to be added to the "Swarajya". The Marathas undertook to maintain peace and order in the six Subhas of the Deccan and agreed to pay an annual tribute and to maintain a contingent of 15,000 Maratha troops for the service of the Emperor.[72]

This was an important treaty and its provisions which had been formulated by Balaji speaks highly for the Peshwa's diplomatic skill. Once more Balaji rendered a signal service to his country. It made Shahu's position secure and respectable not only in the eyes of the Marathas, but also of the Mughals and increased the King's prestige. This was a very profitable subsidiary alliance formed by the Marathas long before the times of Lord Wellesley. The Maratha State secured sovereign rights making as it did the Viceroy dependent on the Marathas for military help and for the maintenance of peace and order. No doubt it complicated the administration with three collectors in each district, but it was surely advantageous to Husenali and the country got a short respite from the horrors of the predatory warfare.

When Ferokshere was requested to ratify it, he refused to sanction it. He had no intention to allow Syed Husenali to make "peace and bind the Marathas to his interests".[73] Husenali himself had accepted it rather as a matter of necessity than of choice. In the meantime the position of his brother at Delhi had become critical on account of the perfidious intrigues of the Emperor. Nizam-ul-Mulk, who was a man of much ability and more cunning, had now thrown in his lot with the Emperor's party though he found it difficult for him to remain on good terms with the men of Ferokshere's confidants. In August 1718 the Emperor attempted to seize Abdulla Khan but failed. Dark webs continued to be woven round him and Abdulla wrote to his brother to come back to Delhi as quickly as possible (September 1718).[74]

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[69] Elliot & Dawson, Vol. VII, p. 464.

[70] Khande Rao was appointed Senapati in place of Man Sing More. Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 28.

[71] Shankraji was sachiv, in the reign of Rajaram and in his old age had retired to Benaras. Thence he had gone to Delhi and was now the Karbhari of Husenali. Rajwade, Vol. II, pp. 29-30. *Life of Shahu Maharaj, the Elder*, p. 49.

[72] See Elliot & Dawson, Vol. VII, p. 467; Scott: *History of the Deccan*, Part IV, p. 152. Rajwade, Vol. VIII, pp. 102-108, and Vol. II, pp. 30-31.

Soon after he received the brother's letter Syed Husenali made his preparations to leave the Deccan. In addition to his own contingent 16,000 Maratha troops under the command of Khanderao Dabhade together with Balaji Vishwanath and Santaji Bhonsle accompanied the Viceroy. The Maratha leaders were given promises of reward for their services, including the confirmation of the treaty.[75] Reinforced by his Maratha auxiliaries and with his conscience easy with regard to Government of the Deccan on account of the recent treaty, Syed Husenali marched straight to Delhi to the utter consternation of the Imperial Court. Ferokshere's schemes fell through one by one from his vacillation and weakness and he was blinded and strangled to death with marks of dishonour on his body. Thus ended one of the saddest episodes of the Mughal history.

A few days after the accession of the new sovereign Balaji got three Firmans from the Emperor: (i) granting the Marathas Chouth for the six Deccan Subhas including the tributary states of Tanjore, Trichinopoli and Mysore, (ii) granting Sardeshmukhi over the Deccan and (iii) confirming Shahu in the possession of the Swarajya of Shivaji at the time of his death.[76] The mother and family of Shahu were also released.

Balaji's last days were spent in giving effect to the provisions of the Firman. He actually stamped out the Mughal authority from Poona, defeated and drove out the Thorat brothers and seriously crippled the prestige of Kolhapur. He died in April 1720. Balaji's life was a period of strenuous work and crowded activity. He had found the country unsettled and weak with civil war; he left it strong, peaceful, and prosperous. He was a man of remarkable tenacity of purpose. But for his unique services at a most critical moment in the Maratha history, Shahu could not have ascerted his position as the lawful head of the Maratha State so easily. The civil war would have been continued and poor Maharashtra would have been robbed of peace for a much longer time. Balaji gave the Maratha State peace, plenty, and stability; organized its finances and made the beginning of the future Maratha Confederacy. He gathered together all the instruments and materials for the inception of an Imperial polity and set the Maratha State on the high road to national glory and territorial expansion.

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[73] *Ibid.*

[74] Irvine: *Later Mughuls*, Vol. I, pp. 339-353.

[75] *Ibid*, pp. 359-360.

[76] Irvine, Vol. I, p. 407. *Life of Shahu Maharaj the Elder*, p. 55.

Baji Rao I appointed as Peshwa

On the 17th of April Baji Rao was appointed to succeed his father as Peshwa at Masur near Karhad.[77] He was confirmed in all his father's Jahagirs and the Jahagirs or Saranjams of Damaji Thorat were further bestowed on him.[78] He had accompanied his father to Delhi and had considerable first-hand knowledge of the political conditions of his times from his constant association with his father in his work. He was an excellent rider and had shown early in his life an aptitude for the profession of a soldier. Though not as learned as his father, he was yet no mean revenue expert and was thus fully equipped, so far as the equipment of a young man of his position could go in those times, to direct the State affairs. In the beginning of his career he was handicapped from two circumstances, (1) Shahu's want of full confidence in him in the initial stages, and (2) the strong partisan opposition of a rival Court party led by Shripatrao Pratinidhi who had succeeded to the office (1718) after his father's death in the same year. But by his great qualities which were to be seen alike on the battlefield and in the Durbar Hall he soon won the warm heart of his King and shattered the opposition of the Pratinidhi's party. He continued his father's work and gave it a clear direction, amplifying the same with such good results that his achievements ranked second only to those of Shivaji the Great in Maratha history.

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[77] Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 39 footnote.

[78] Rajwade, Vol. IV, p. 38. It has been represented by some historians that Shahu was reluctant to appoint him to the high office. (See Chronicle of the Peshwas, p. 10.) But this assumption is unwarranted (Bharatwarsha, 1899—July article No. 2, p. 4). Having closely watched him from boyhood and being a shrewd judge of men Shahu was convinced of his ability and hence had no hesitation in conferring the chief Ministership on him. See Sardesai, *M.R.* (M.V.), Vol. I, pp. 136-37.

Baji Rao's accession to power synchronised with an important revolution in Delhi politics which resulted in the change of power from the hands of the King-makers to those of Nizam-ul-Mulk. The Nizam was a man who excelled no less in cunning and intrigue than in generalship and the Marathas had now to bear the brunt of his able resistance to their interests in the Deccan. His victories at Khandwa (June 1720) and Balapur (August 1720) followed by the treacherous murder of Husenali and the imprisonment and suicide of Abdulla Khan made him master of the six subhas of the Deccan. He resumed his friendship with Sambhaji, Chandrasen and other Maratha rebels and at once set to work out his tortuous policy by thwarting Mahipatrao in the latter's object to appoint Maratha officers for the collection of the chouth. But Baji Rao had anticipated the sinister designs of the Nizam and had already procured the reconfirmation of the treaty of 1718-19 from the new emperor. On receipt of the confirmation Baji Rao proceeded to realise the chouth and to enforce other provisions of the treaty by force of arms. He assembled an army under the command of the Sarlaskar in Gangathadi and took possession of Baramati by forcibly ejecting the Mughal officers. The Nizam sent an army to invade the Maratha territory but Baji Rao had wisely posted the Sarlaskar at Gangathadi and the invaders were chased out with heavy losses.[79] The contest for mastery between the Nizam and the young Peshwa was thus begun and Baji Rao's foresight saved the situation. This was, however, the mere beginning of the young minister's wonderful activities. In January 1721 he encountered the Nizam himself near Baramati and then sweeping through Khandesh, Surat, and Rajpipla appeared on the banks of the Godavari by the beginning of the rains.[80] In the meantime the Pratinidhi had been deputed to bring the Karnatic under the Maratha sway and the Nizam marched to the south followed by Baji Rao. But the Nizam had been recalled by the Emperor to Delhi and had to leave for the North immediately. His departure from the Deccan left Baji Rao free to develop his far-reaching policy. He enunciated clearly for the first time his forward policy of founding a Maratha Empire on the ruins of that of the Mughals and the politics of the Maratha State received a new turn.

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[79] Sardesai, *M.R.* (M. Vibh.), Vol. I, p. 161; *Life of Shahu Maharaj the Elder*, p. 42.

The Peshwa vs. *The Pratinidhi*

What was to be the future policy of the Maratha State in view of the fact that the Mughal Empire was fast decaying and was now a prey to internal confusion? A great controversy raged round this question in the Maratha Court. There were two schools of thought, one led by the Peshwa, Baji Rao, and the other by the Pratinidhi, Shripatrao.

Baji Rao had encountered repeated difficulties in realising Chouth and Sardeshmukhi from the Nizam as his deputy in respect of the six Subhas of the Deccan. The provisions of the treaty could only be enforced so long as the Marathas were militarily strong. Being a soldier by temperament Baji Rao thought it more manly to impose one's own authority than to pray for certain privileges. The forward policy was in his opinion more in keeping with the respective strength of the Marathas and the Mughals; while the Marathas were emerging strong out of chaos, the condition of the Delhi Court was becoming worse day by day. An aggressive policy of war and conquest would also strengthen the Maratha State. So Baji Rao stood out boldly for the policy of territorial expansion at the expense of the Mughal Empire. He therefore on his sole initiative sent orders to the Maratha Sardars to make raids into Malwa and Gujrat. These independent proceedings of Baji Rao without reference to Shahu were not pleasing to the king and seemed highly outrageous to the party of the Pratinidhi. Shripatrao, the leader of the latter party, held that the time was not ripe for actual aggression which would come duly when they had a well-ordered state and sound finances. The infant Maratha State emerging from the exhaustion of a civil war would, he thought, not be able to bear the strain of aggression and to shoulder the responsibilities of a growing empire. Shahu was a man of peaceful tendencies and as gratitude to the Emperors was a cardinal principle with him, he was always averse to a war with the Mughals. Thus the reigning sovereign was in agreement with the Pratinidhi. The king and the other ministers felt highly nervous at the bold attitude of the young and inexperienced Peshwa. Shahu therefore wrote several letters to Baji Rao inviting him for a personal interview at which this important matter would be discussed. Baji Rao paid at first scant attention to these invitations but when a peremptory letter,[81] hinting at his disloyalty and threatening dismissal for his obdurate attitude, was received from the Court, he obeyed the order. He came and in a conference of all the ministers of state he courageously faced his opponents.

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[80] Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 44; also Bharatvarsha July 1899—Pant Pradhan yanchi Dusari Shakavali.

In the debate Shripatrao strongly urged a policy of peace towards their neighbours on the grounds that Maharashtra had not yet recovered from the ravages of the civil war, that the finances of the State were in a deplorable condition, and that there was a powerful and capable ruler like the Nizam as neighbour. It would be wiser, he suggested, to desist from aggression and to concentrate on internal organisation until the State had become wealthy and strong. After that they could conquer countries nearer home, retake Jinji and annex Karnatic and then think of conquering Hindustan. As against this Baji Rao outlined a brilliant policy of war and territorial expansion. He pointed out that the best way to bring money into the empty treasury was not to waste the remaining resources in the barren plains of the Deccan but to attack and plunder after the wonderful manner of Shivaji the Great the rich provinces of Hindustan. In an eloquent and inspiring speech he endeavoured to rouse enthusiasm or ambition in the King by dwelling on the glorious conquests of his illustrious grandfather and reminding him of the powerful kings of Bijapur and Golkonda, and the mighty Emperor with whom he had successfully contended. He drew their attention to the present condition of India, to weakness, indolence and imbecility of the Mughals on the one hand and the activity, energy and enterprise of the Marathas on the other. The speech made a tremendous impression on Shahu and all present. "Now is our time," said the gallant Peshwa, "to drive strangers from the land of the Hindus and to acquire immortal renown. By directing our efforts to Hindustan, the Maratha flag in your reign shall fly from the Krishna to the Attock." The generous-hearted Shahu, now thoroughly warmed up, exclaimed, "You shall plant it on the Himalayas. You are indeed a noble son of a worthy father." Improving the opportunity Baji Rao further urged Shahu not to think of minor objects and referring to the Mughal Empire said, "Let us strike at the trunk of the withering tree; the branches must fall of themselves."[82] The stirring eloquence of the young and able Peshwa won the day and in spite of the elements of truth in the Pratinidhi's arguments the policy of war and conquest was agreed to by the King, who gave Baji Rao a free hand thereafter.[83]

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[81] Rajwade, Vol. VI, Document No. 16.

Baji Rao was as good as his word. In December 1723 he entered Malwa at the head of a large army and attacked the capital Ujjain. He levied the chouth from the country upto Bundelkhand and while returning home left Udaji Pawar at Dhar, Malharrao Holkar at Indore and Ranoji Shinde at Ujjain as his deputies to realise the annual contributions.[84]

While thus Baji Rao was winning his victories, both political and military, the affairs of the Mughal Empire were gradually falling into a chronic state of anarchy and chaos. The Nizam was indeed appointed Vazier and he was the one man who could have stemmed the rising tide of Maratha invasion. But incompatibility of age and temperament between the Nizam and the Emperor made the former's task as Vazier unenviable. The frivolous Emperor, Bahadur Shah, did not like from the beginning the stern puritanism and seriousness of his Vazier. The weak-kneed Emperor was completely under the thumb of the worthless favourites and the Vazier found himself obstructed at every step. All his salutary measures which would have saved the Empire from ruin at least for some time went unheeded and the poor Vazier was ridiculed in the open Court.

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[82] G. Duff: *History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, pp. 412-413. *Life of Shahu Maharaj the Elder*, pp. 61-62.

[83] Sardesai, *M.R.* (M.Vibh.), Vol. I, p. 176.

[84] Rajwade, Vol. II, pp. 47-49.

Soon plots and counter-plots were set on foot against him and he had to meet a host of enemies, all the more dangerous because they were covert. In such a difficult situation even the appointment of the Nizam to the post of Vazier could not stay the rapid disintegration of the Mughal Empire. In utter unconcern he let the affairs drift in their own way and the fatal results did not take much time to follow. The Rajputs attained to a power, not known before; the Jats and the Rohillas carved out independent principalities for themselves; and the Marathas embarked upon a resolute policy of expansion. The Marathas had already begun their raids into the Imperial provinces and their task was rendered easy by the weak Government and the willing allegiance of the inhabitants who were oppressed by successive governors. The chiefs of Malwa and Bundelkhand actually invited the Marathas into their country. The Mughal Empire was on its way to dissolution. The Nizam, therefore, found his position intolerable and without waiting for orders set out for the Deccan, on the plea that his presence was imperatively needed in his Subhas owing to the expeditions of the Marathas into Malwa and Gujrat.[85] The Emperor now conferred the Viceroyalty of the Deccan on Mubariz Khan, the Deputy Governor, and instigated him to resist the Nizam and kill him if possible. The Nizam applied for help to Shahu[86] and the combined army won a decisive victory at Shakar Khed. Mubariz Khan was killed and the Nizam took possession of Hyderabad by the beginning of 1725.[87] Foiled in his attempt to encompass the Nizam's destruction the Emperor deprived him of the office of Vazier and the governorship of Gujrat and Malwa. Being thus shorn of power and resources, the Nizam decided to concentrate henceforth his attention on the Deccan and made up his mind to have his own way in that province unhampered by the caprices and intrigues of the Delhi Court. From this time dated the virtual independence[88] of the Nizam and the Hyderabad State became a factor in Indian politics.

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[85] Elliot & Dawson, Vol. VII, p. 525.

[86] Rajwade, Vol. II, Introduction, p. 14.

[87] Irvine, Vol. II, p. 146; See also Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 49.

[88] Irvine: *Later Mughals*, Vol. II, p. 154.

The Nizam and Shahu

Free from the trammels of the shifting Delhi politics, the Nizam set continuously to make his authority absolute in the Deccan. But here he was painfully aware of the existence of his formidable enemy, the Marathas. They had already gained the rights of Chouth and Sardeshmukhi over the Deccan and the raids on Mughal provinces were assuming great proportions day by day. As the best means of weakening their pressure the wily Nizam relied upon his old policy of stirring up domestic strife in the Maratha State. But he knew that it would be a very risky procedure to show his hand immediately. He had received substantial help from Shahu in the battle of Shakar Khed and the Maratha king had been inclined to regard him as his friend. Shahu's predilections towards the Mughals always stood in his way of judging the motives of the Nizam who had kept up studiously a show of good will towards him. It would be a rude shock to him to begin hostilities at once. Hence he was biding his time. When the opportunity came he placed himself at the head of a strong Maratha faction against Baji Rao and Shahu and there was a rupture between the Marathas and the Nizam.

Prosperous and secure at home and at peace with his neighbours, Shahu thought of annexing the Karnatic to the Swarajya in accordance with the conditions of the treaty of 1718 as ratified by the Emperor. Accordingly two expeditions were sent out under the supreme command of Fatehsingh Bhonsle who was associated with Baji Rao and other Maratha leaders. This campaign, though an army of 50,000 troops was engaged each time for six months, was not a success[89] and the advantages which had been expected by Shahu were not gained but it had created a number of enemies for Shahu and Baji Rao. The king of the Marathas was no statesman; he was indeed ignorant of the intricate problems of diplomacy. He did not realise that the Nizam was the most vindictive of his enemies in the Deccan. If however the king had been deceived, his Peshwa who had correctly gauged the depth of the Nizam, was not. The Karnatic campaign gave mortal offence to the Nizam and it, therefore, led to the breach of the suppossed friendship to continue which he had even instructed his Sirdars not to ravage the Nizam's Jahagirs in Gujrat.

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[89] G. Duff: *History of the Marathas*, Vol. I. p. 420.

Sambhaji claimed for himself the country between the Krishna and the Tungabhadra and hence he too was displeased by the Karnatic campaign. These two now made common cause and drew to their side others who resented the personal ascendency of the masterful Peshwa. The Pratinidhi, Chandrasen Murarji Ghorpade, Udaji Chavan, Rambhaji Nimbalkar, and Trimbakrao Dabhade—all these were in the conspiracy of the Nizam and their selfish activities troubled Baji Rao for a long time which he could have otherwise devoted to the welfare of his country.

If Sambhaji and the Nizam became allies because their interests suffered in the Karnatic by the Karnatic campaign, Trimbakrao joined them because his interests in Gujrat were rudely interfered with. It had been the settled policy of Baji Rao to raid these rich provinces of the north and levy contribution from them by force of arms. The entry of the Marathas in Malwa was made easy by the friendly co-operation of Sawai-Jaisingh of Jaipur and Nandalal Mandloi Chaudhary of Indore.

Thus the Nizam, Sambhaji, and Trimbakrao had made common cause against Shahu and Baji Rao, but they failed partly owing to their lack of co-operation and partly owing to penetration and vigour of Baji Rao. The contest lasted for four years (1727-1731) and fell into three phases. The first was the contest between Baji Rao and the Nizam, the second between Shahu and Sambhaji of Kolhapur, and the third between Baji Rao and Dabhade.

The Nizam was studiously cautious in carrying out his designs against Shahu. His first move was to transfer his capital from Aurangabad to Hyderabad, so as to be nearer Karnatic and farther away from Satara. From there he could better control the activities of the Marathas in the Karnatic and his own movements should be better concealed from Satara. But the mere transfer of the capital would avail him nothing against the ubiquitous Marathas and their Mokasdars or Tax-Collectors who had been already posted to all the six Subhas of the Deccan. These Tax-gatherers kept the Maratha authorities at home fully informed of his proceedings, and also their presence in Hyderabad and its adjoining districts was a perpetual humiliation to him. To get rid of them therefore he proposed to the gullible Pratinidhi, when Baji Rao was absent on the Karnatic expedition, a new arrangement by which he would make an annual payment of an equivalent sum of money to the Marathas provided they never entered Hyderabad. In lieu of this annual tribute he assigned a substantial jahagir in Berar to the Pratinidhi and an estate near Baramati to Shahu. Pratinidhi's pronounced views of maintaining peace with the neighbours and the tempting appeal to his self-interests made him favour the proposal and hence when the matter was referred to his advisers all except the penetrating Baji Rao gave their assent to it. The Peshwa alone resented the measure and when his patriotic advice was disregarded by the King he left for Poona in disgust. On the other hand the Nizam killed two birds with one shot—he accomplished his own end and had accentuated the differences at the Maratha Court, the gulf between the Peshwa and the Pratinidhi having been thus widened.

The Nizam next sedulously set to rouse the jealousy of the discontented Sambhaji through the good offices of the traitor Chandrasen Jadhav.[90] The Nizam promised his help to Sambhaji and instigated him to demand half of the Swarajya from Shahu. He then told Shahu that until their respective claims were definitely settled it would be unfair on his part to pay the tribute to Shahu and his officers.[91] After this the Nizam showed himself in his true colours and it came as a shock to Shahu. The Nizam chose an opportune time to commence hostilities when in November 1726 the Peshwa and the Senapati had departed for the Karnatic. The blow was so quick that Shahu did not get time to meet it. Kanhoji Bhonsle was defeated and Chimnaji Damodar who was wavering in his loyalty to Shahu was won over by Sambhaji. The allies occupied the whole country upto the bank of the Bhima and in February 1727 the Nizam and Sambhaji were encamped in Poona from where Sambhaji bestowed grants on various persons. Shahu's position again became shaky and he was not relieved of his anxiety till Baji Rao's arrival in April 1727 from the Karnatic. Now he realised the folly of following the selfish policy of the Pratinidhi and the significance of Baji Rao's resentment. He, therefore, gave the entire management of the campaign against the Nizam to Baji Rao and the latter rose equal to the occasion. All the difficulties seemed to disappear at his magic touch. Starting from Poona after the Dasara, Baji Rao marched plundering and burning without mercy the Nizam's towns in all directions till at last when the latter reached Pal Khed he suddenly turned round and completely enveloped him. The Nizam was now in a terrible predicament, he could neither proceed further nor recede back. He was thus forced to accept the treaty of Mungi-Shegaon (March 1728) by which the humiliated Nizam had to recognise Shahu as the sole King of Maharashtra and to agree to pay all the arrears of the Chouth and Sardeshmukhi and to reinstate the Maratha Tax-gatherers in his dominions. It was a glorious day for the young Peshwa. He had unaided brought the hero of a hundred battles to his knees and had dictated to him the terms. It endeared Baji Rao to Shahu to a degree never known before; it humbled the Pratinidhi and his party and the Maratha State was saved the evils of an interminable civil war. In addition to these political results the campaign demonstrated the triumph of guerilla warfare. Like Shivaji the Great, Baji Rao I showed himself a past master in that art.

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[90] Sardesai, *M.R.* (M. Vibh), Vol. I, pp. 183-184.

[91] Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 55.

Thus the Nizam was knocked out of the alliance with one blow and Sambhaji alone remained to be punished for his incessant intrigues. Shahu, therefore, decided to reduce his pretentions once for all and in this even the Pratinidhi, who had been feeling uneasy about his part in the Nizam affair, joined. He knew he had been outstripped by Baji Rao in the eyes of the country and the King, and wanted to retrieve his lost prestige in the coming contest with Sambhaji. Sambhaji, in spite of his vigorous preparations, was easily reduced to submission and the Warna treaty (April 1731) finally put an end to the domestic differences existing between Satara and Kolhapur ever since 1707. By the Warna treaty Sambhaji was relegated to a subordinate position and was made a dependant of Shahu. The treaty effected a division of the kingdom but nevertheless it recorded a distinct advance in the authority of Shahu within his territory and guarded his suzerainty from intermittent exposures to the side-winds of civil strife. Lastly, it smoothed the path of the Peshwa and gave him the necessary respite at home to carry out successfully his policy abroad.

The time of reckoning now arrived for the third miscreant, Trimbakrao Dabhade, who had succeeded to the office and possessions of his father in January 1730. The Dabhades had been members of the party opposed to the Peshwa at the Court. They had been jealous of the personal ascendency of the Peshwa and now their jealousy was fanned into open enmity by Baji Rao's interference in the affairs of Gujrat and the interested intrigues of the Nizam. Baji Rao did not approve of the King's policy of allotting entire provinces to different Sirdars for the collection of the Chouth and the Sardeshmukhi. He knew that such a policy would make the Sirdars independent of one another and would destroy the very foundation of the Maratha Confederacy which depended for its success on the interdependence of all. On the score of his opposition to this policy he was involved in frequent quarrels with the different chieftains not one of whom realised the goodness of his point of view. Gujrat had been assigned to Dabhade and Malwa to the Peshwa. In pursuance of his policy Baji Rao proposed to the Senapati that he should give the Peshwa half of his revenue of Gujrat and the Peshwa would give him half of his yield of Malwa. When the Senapati rejected with scorn his proposal, the domineering Peshwa proceeded to enforce the measure on him. This interference in Gujrat matters, which the Dabhades regarded according to the prevailing fashion as their sole preserve, brought matters to a head. The Nizam ever since Pal Khed had been secretly fomenting all the intrigues against the domination of the Peshwa. The arch enemy of the Maratha National cause again got an excellent opportunity and he widened the breach between Trimbakrao Dabhade and Baji Rao by promising the former his own support. It was arranged that Dabhade and Udaji Pawar who had quarrelled with Baji Rao as far back as November 1729 should unite their forces with those of Nizam and all of them should then march to destroy Baji Rao. But all their plans were shattered by the masterly strategy of Baji Rao who swooped down upon the combined army of Dabhade and Pawar before they effected a junction with Nizam and with a considerably inferior force defeated and killed Dabhade at Dabhai (April 1731).[92] The obdurate Dabhade whom even the king could not bring to his senses invited by his own rashness this disaster on his head and his faction was wiped off in blood. Baji Rao tried an amicable settlement and "commenced negotiations from the day of his quitting Poona and continued it until the hour of attack. His death left complete victory to Baji Rao with all but nominal control of the Maratha sovereignty."[93] The sanguinary duel in which Baji Rao's hated rival, Dabhade, was killed left the field free for the Peshwa and henceforth he became the Senapati also for all practical purposes. It did more. It secured the triumph of Baji Rao's policy and helped the building-up of the Maratha Confederacy as envisaged by Balaji Vishwanath. We must not forget that the personal contest involved a principle, that Baji Rao was fighting for the national policy and not for his own interest and that Trimbakrao Dabhade was actuated by no other consideration but personal interest and personal hatred and jealousy. Dabhade's conduct was anti-national and unpatriotic inasmuch as he was acting at the instigation of the sworn-enemy of Maharashtra, the Nizam.

After the bloody episode Shahu passed orders that half the revenues of each province should be paid direct to the royal treasury by the Peshwa and the other half of Gujrat and Malwa should be allotted for military expenses to Dabhade and Baji Rao respectively. In spite of the royal generosity the house of Dabhades never recovered from the ruinous defeat of Dabhai[94] and the power ultimately passed from their hands to those of the descendents of Pilaji Gaikwad. As soon as his accounts were settled with the Senapati, Baji Rao made preparations to teach a lesson to Nizam who was the prime cause of all his troubles. But the artful ruler now saw the necessity of buying off Baji Rao on his own terms. He promised to give Baji Rao free passage through his dominions into Malwa and urged him to conquer the rich imperial provinces rather than waste his energies in the barren soil of the Deccan. "In August 1731 Baji Rao and Nizam-ul-Mulk agreed to give each other a free hand—the Nizam should be at liberty to gratify his ambitions in the South, the Peshwa in the North."[95] Thus Baji Rao was left to pursue his policy of exhaustion unhampered by the rivalry of the Nizam. And the Nizam also had his purpose served, eager as he was to keep himself behind the barrier of the Marathas so that he might be free from the jealousies and intrigues of Delhi.[96] Thus were the Marathas set on the track to Delhi through the selfish ambition of the Nizam but it bore bitter fruits for the Mughal Empire.

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[92] Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 61; *Life of Shahu Maharaj the Elder*, p. 68.
[93] G. Duff: *History of the Marathas*, Vol. I.
[94] Kincaid & Parasnis, p. 231.

Half of the Gujrat revenue had been assigned to Yeshwantrao Dabhade, the Senapati, after the battle of Dabhai. But he was a worthless man and the entire management of his affairs in Gujrat was left to Pilaji Gaikwad. Pilaji being capable, realised the Chouth and Sardeshmukhi and Maharaja Abhaisingh, the Governor, knowing that he would never be able to pacify Gujrat so long as Pilaji lived caused him to be murdered at Dakore, a place sacred to the whole of Maharashtra.[97] Even this dastardly act did not save Gujrat. Its affairs sank into greater confusion of which the Marathas took full advantage and the province was practically lost to the Mughal Empire after 1735.[98]

The province of Malwa also shared the same fate. Nandlal Chaudhary of Indore being in charge of all the fords of the Narmada held the key to Malwa. With his assistance the Marathas poured into Malwa in accordance with the scheme of Hindu revival formed by Sawai Jaisingh. After the dismal failure of Aurangzeb Sawai Jaisingh entertained hopes of reviving Hindu glory by joint efforts of the Rajputs in the North and the Marathas in the South. Other Rajputs also helped the Maratha cause, thus facilitating Baji Rao's task in Malwa. The Emperor nominated Raja Girdhar to the government of Malwa for the second time in 1725 and he carried on a gallant struggle against the Maratha hordes in utter disregard of the advice of Sawai Jaisingh. In 1728 Chimnaji Appa arrived in Malwa to assist Baji Rao's agents already posted there.[99] The magnitude of the growing Maratha menace could be seen from the fact that in 1728 Udaji received a further grant of thirty-three Mahals and Malharrao Holkar his first grant of twelve Mahals north of the Narmada.[1] Chimnaji Appa and Udaji Pawar marched at the head of a strong army and conscious of their strength and assured of the loyalty of the countryside they came on Raja Girdhar at Saragpur like a blinding mist. A bloody battle was fought in which the Raja was killed and his troops dispersed. Here Baji Rao received the urgent call for help from Chhatrasal of Bundelkhand and he led the Maratha army in person from Malwa to his aid. Chhatrasal who was actively aiding the Hindu revival as conceived by Sawai Jaisingh, was hard pressed by Mahomed Khan Bangash and sent an urgent request to Baji Rao for help. The turbulent Zamindars of the province joined Baji Rao on the way and with his army[2] now swollen to 70,000 men Baji Rao surrounded Bangash in his entrenched camp and starved him out. At last Bangash was forced to retire from Bundelkhand after signing a written agreement not to attack them again but to content himself with the tribute they had formerly paid."[3]

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[95] Kincaid & Parasnis, p. 240.

[96] Malcolm: *Central India*, Vol. I, p. 79.

[97] G. Duff, Vol. I.

[98] Scott: *Deccan*, Vol. II, pp. 190-91. Bombay Gazetteer Vol. I, Part I, pp. 394-395.

[99] These became founders of the three great houses of Central India—Holkars of Indore, Shindes of Gwalior, and Pawars of Dhar—See Kincaid and Parasnis. Sardesai, *M. Riyasat* (M.V.) Vol. I, pp. 334-336.

In return for this timely aid Chhatrasal gave one-third of his kingdom to Baji Rao, yielding a revenue of 33 lakhs a year. These new acquisitions were put in charge of Govind Pant Bundele, a Karhada Brahmin, as Baji Rao's agent. Thus the Marathas secured a foothold in Bundelkhand. If the Marathas entered Malwa through the help of Mandloi and Sawai Jaisingh they came to Bundelkhand at the invitation of Chhatrasal. Baji Rao's late acquisitions brought the Marathas in direct touch with the Doab and the Imperial city of Agra. From the vantage point of Kalpi he was not only to dominate all central India but also to strike terror into Delhi and the Doab.

After the death of Raja Girdhar in 1728 Daya Bahadur took his place as Governor of **Malwa, 1729.** He wanted to remove from his path the stumbling block of Nandlal Mandloi by winning him over by successive threats and entreaties but nothing proved useful. On the whole Nandlal remained friendly to the Marathas and as the Governor further alienated the subordinate Thakurs of Malwa by "the oppressions and rapacious exactions imposed on them",[4] the Maratha cause continued to prosper. While encamped at Tirelah near Dhar the Marathas engaged Daya Bahadur, defeated and slew him on the battlefield. On the news of the victory Baji Rao crossed the Narmada and came into Malwa to make arrangements for the newly acquired territories. The settlement made by Shahu was confirmed and it was further agreed that out of the revenues of the newly acquired territories 31 per cent should be paid to the royal treasury, 30 per cent should be the share of each of Shinde and Holkar and 9 per cent of Pawar.[5]

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[1] Malcolm: *Central India*, Vol. I, p. 146.

[2] Irvine: *Later Mughuls*, Vol. II, pp. 237-239.

[3] Irvine, Vol. II, p. 241—there is some difference in Scott's *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 192.

When the news about Malwa reached Delhi, the Emperor sent Mahomedkhan Bangash as the Governor of the province who was replaced in 1734 by Maharaja Jaisingh. The Marathas in the meantime had honey-combed the country and their armies in the province under different leaders now numbered one hundred thousand horse.[6] Even the frequent change in the Governors did not bring corresponding change in the fortunes of the Mughal Empire. Repeated successes made the Marathas bolder than ever before and they now felt that there was nothing that could prevent them from invading Delhi, from realising their ambition of striking at the trunk. Baji Rao's able lieutenants Malharrao Holkar and Ranoji Shinde, actuated by the daring designs of their chief harried the imperial provinces year after year and carried fire and sword far and wide. So distressing did the condition of the Empire become that the Emperor, sick of the warfare, accepted the advice of Jaisingh to give up the Government of Malwa to Baji Rao and opened negotiations with the Marathas.

He was of course unwilling to concede all the conditions of Baji Rao but on this occasion granted one, the right of Sardeshpandya, i.e. the right of collecting 5 per cent of the revenue of the Deccan to Baji Rao. It required another surprise visit to Delhi on the part of Baji Rao and his elusive Marathas to overawe him into agreeing to the rest of his demands some time later. After his sudden dash on Delhi Baji Rao received the Government of Malwa in addition to 3 lakhs of rupees. Thus though the Emperor was forced by adverse circumstances to bring himself to hand over the Government of Malwa to Baji Rao he had not reconciled himself to its final surrender to the Marathas. He immediately called the Nizam to the aid of the tottering Empire and invested him once again with the office of Chief Minister. The Nizam too was not averse to accept this offer since he thought it to be the only means of crushing the Marathas and his hated rival Baji Rao. Baji Rao, however, so effectually cooped up the veteran Nizam near Bhopal (1737)[7] that in the end he promised in his own handwriting to grant to his adversary the whole of Malwa and the complete sovereignty of the territory between the Narmada and the Chambal, to obtain confirmation thereof from the Emperor, and to use his best endeavours to obtain fifty lakhs of rupees for his expenses. This was the famous convention of Durai Sarai (January 1738).

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[4] Malcolm: *Central India*, Vol. I, p. 83.
[5] Sardesai, *M.R.* (M.V.), Vol. I, p. 333.
[6] Irvine: *Later Mughals*, Vol. II, p. 254.

Thus after years of struggle Baji Rao made good the claim of the Marathas to Malwa and won for himself the right of Sardeshpandya on the Deccan. He had struck at Delhi, the proud capital of the Mughal Emperors, terrorised the Emperor and had at last succeeded in realising a part of his ambitious policy.

The Peshwa establishes his supremacy in the Konkan
(1733-39)

The progress of the Maratha arms in the Konkan was equally rapid and the credit of the success must be set down to the account of the Peshwa's brother Chimnaji Appa. The presence of the foreigners—the Siddis, the Portuguese and the English with their headquarters at Janjira, Goa and Bombay respectively—was an eyesore to the Marathas. Of these the Siddis were the most formidable at this period and they had gained considerable accession of strength during the War of Independence. They had been given by Aurangzeb Raigad, Anjanwell, Sindhudurg, and other fortresses as a reward for their help.[8] The Portuguese with important points like Salsette, Bassein, etc. came second best. The English had only the barren island of Bombay and as yet thought of nothing more than commerce. The rise of Kanhoji Angre was a check on the further ambitions of the Siddis and a danger to the power of the rest. Great both as a sailor and a soldier, Kanhoji was an ambitious man and "Master of practically the whole coast from Bombay harbour to Malwan with a considerable tract stretching inland."[9] But singlehanded he was not able to reduce the power of the Siddis, the Portuguese and the English. Balaji's treaty with him had brought him, as we have already seen, into the feudatory system of the Marathas and had thus brought him the support of the central Maratha State against the foreigners.

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[7] Irvine: *Later Mughals*, Vol. II, pp. 302-303.

[8] Parasnis: *Life of Brahmendra Swami*, p. 42. Rajwade, Vol. II, pp. 64-65.

Kanhoji's one aim was to sweep the Konkan clean of the foreigners. He considered the Siddis as his chief enemies and especially so because they retained possession of Raigad, hallowed with the many associations of Shivaji the Great. The Siddis always harassed the peaceful Hindus of the Konkan and often committed outrages on them.[10] Now the Marathas were bound by honour and obligation to chastise them and check their depredations for by the treaty of 1719 with the Emperor they were pledged to keep peace in the Deccan.[11] Kanhoji found it beyond his power to punish Siddis unaided specially because the latter were supported from time to time by the Portuguese and the English. He naturally sought help from Shahu but before the promised army could be despatched from Satara a regrettable incident aggravated the situation.

The famous elephant incident led to the complete destruction of the temple of Parshuram at the hands of Siddisat of Anjanwel, one of the Governors of Siddi Yakut of Janjira. Highly incensed at this outrage Brahmendra Swami in 1728 "shook from off his his feet the dust of the Konkan and ascending the Ghats went to live in Dhavadshi."[12] The Swami persuaded Shahu and Baji Rao to root out the hated barbarians, the Siddis, and restore the glory of Hinduism and the prestige of the Brahmins. He infused the crusader's spirit in the king and his minister and the Pratinidhi,[13] who had his jahagir in the Konkan, was asked to undertake the holy campaign. During 1729-30 the Pratinidhi did not accomplish anything appreciable. On the other hand owing to the death of the able Kanhoji (1729) the Siddi grew very defiant and took advantage of the family squabbles between Angre's sons to make his aggrandisement at their expense.[14] Early in 1730 the campaign was renewed when the Pratinidhi was sent towards Kolaba and Ratnagiri.[15] This campaign too was barren of results partly because the Pratinidhi was soon recalled to take the command of the army against Sambhaji (November 1730) at his own request and partly because Shaikhoji, the son of Kanhoji, would not help the Pratinidhi at the instigation of Baji Rao, the latter's rival.[16] The consequences of the mutual jealousy between Shaikhoji and Sambhaji, (Kanhoji's two sons) which was fanned by Baji Rao and Brahmendra Swami for their personal ends was that the operation of the Marathas in the Konkan was seriously hampered to the immense advantage of the Siddis.[17] So far Baji Rao was too busy elsewhere to pay personal attention to these campaigns but when Dabhai assured his personal ascendency at the end of 1732 he resolved to take the languishing affairs of the Konkan in his own hands and make his power supreme there as well. This he accomplished during the years 1733-39.

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[9] Downing: *A Compendious History of the Indian Wars, etc*—Ed. W. Foster, Introduction, p. 13.

[10] Parasnis: *Life of Brahmendra Swami*, p. 43.

[11] Rajwade: Introduction to Vol. III, p. 11.

[12] *Life of Brahmendra Swami*—Parasnis, pp. 19-22. For his earlier life see *Ibid*, pp. 1-11.

The repeated failures and the consequent disgrace that the indolent and the incapable Pratinidhi had brought on himself gave Baji Rao [18] an opportunity to prove his superiority over his opponent. At this time the death of Siddi Rasul Yakut, the chief of the Siddis (February 1733) gave the signal for a civil war [19] at Janjira and aided by that circumstance Baji Rao at once took the fortresses of Tala, Ghosala, Dandarajapuri, and thus opened the campaign with great vigour.[20] In June 1733 Raigad, Bankot, and other fortresses were taken by the Marathas even though the Siddis received some help from the Portuguese[21] and by July nothing remained to the Siddis except Janjira, Anjanwell, Goalkot, and two or three other strongly fortified points.

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[13] Baji Rao agreed to the expedition being led by the Pratinidhi in his own interest as it would keep him away from the Court. See Rajwade: Introduction to Vol. III, pp. 22-23.

[14] *Life of Brahmendra Swami*—Parasnis, pp. 19-22.

[15] Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 59.

[16] Rajwade, Vol. III, Document No. 249. *Ibid*, Introduction, p. 23.

[17] *Ibid*, Introduction, pp. 20-21.

[18] See Rajwade, Vol. III, Document Nos. 305, 330, 331 and Introduction to Vol. III, p. 24.

[19] *Life of Brahmendra Swami*, pp. 49-50; Rajwade, Vol. IV. *Life of Shahu Maharaj the Elder*, pp. 88-89. Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 65.

The English, who had skilfully managed upto this point to keep themselves away from these fights, now began to be uneasy at the predominant position of the Marathas which upset the balance of power in the Konkan. They became nervous for their safety and began to aid the weaker party,[22] the Siddis. The position of the Marathas was further weakened by the death[23] of Shaikhoji Angre and the consequent domestic quarrels between Sambhaji and Manaji, each of whom claimed the headship of the Maratha fleet. The result was the command of the sea passed into the hands of the enemies of the Marathas and they made an alliance against them. The Marathas, however, who had never learned to sink their personal differences in the face of any common danger, however great, to the National cause, continued these quarrels. Umabai Dabhade and Damaji Gaikwad, who had been ordered to check the progress of a relieving force from Surat, allowed it to reach Janjira owing to their hostility to Baji Rao. The Angres were busy with their own domestic feuds, and there was the standing rivalry between Shripatrao Pratinidhi and Baji Rao. The combined effect of these factors was that the Maratha efforts slackened and the campaign with the promising beginning threatened to be an ignominious failure. The difficulties of the situation, loss of control of the sea, and the want of unity between the different feudatory chieftains, therefore, induced Baji Rao to make peace with the Siddis[24] (December 1733). Abdul Rehman was recognised as the chief of Janjira and the Marathas retained the fortresses of Raigad and Mahad. Five and half Mahals of the Siddis were added to the Maratha Kingdom and the rest of the conquered territory was restored to the Siddis.[25] The treaty crippled the Siddis' power and left the Peshwa, who added two fortresses and the ceded territory to his former possessions, supreme in the Konkan. Baji Rao then returned to Satara early in 1734.

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[20] Sardesai, Vol. I, pp. 249-50.

[21] Sen: *Military system of the Marathas*, p. 215.

[22] The English sent two ships, the Rose and Mary to the help of the Siddis but this was not of much use to the Siddis—The Rose was captured by the Marathas and Mary was beaten back. See Sinha: *Rise of the Marathas*, p. 153.

[23] Rajwade, Vol. III, Intro., p. 31; *Life of Brahmendra Swami*, p. 51.

[24] Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 69.

But so long as Anjanwell and Goalkot which were in the neighbourhood of the Shrine of Parshuram remained in the hands of the Siddis, Shahu, egged on by Brahmendra Swami, refused to stop the hostilities and after Baji Rao's return, his opponents Sambhaji Angre and the Pratinidhi continued the campaign by the king's orders. Other Sirdars[26] were ordered out to their assistance and later on even Baji Rao[27] joined them but their attempts were not crowned with success owing to the want of siege guns and ammunition.[28] In the meanwhile the Siddis grew more powerful, took the offensive and raided the newly acquired Maratha land. The Siddis' pretensions brought Chimnaji Appa on the scene and a bloody battle was fought near Rewas (April 1736) in which Siddi-Sat[29] and Siddi Yakub,[30] the commandants of the fort of Underi, were both slain.

The Marathas won the victory at a heavy price and the death of Siddi-Sat having pacified Shahu and Brahmendra, Siddi-Rehman's offer of peace was accepted and a new treaty was made between the parties (November 1736) on the basis of the old one (1733). Anjanwel and Goalkot however remained in the hands of the Siddis. It confirmed the supremacy of the Peshwa and hereafter his authority was left unchallenged in the Konkan. The Siddis, bereft of their former powerful prestige, fast sank into a subordinate position.

It must not to be overlooked that the conduct of Baji Rao in the Konkan campaigns had been purely personal. He always watched for his opportunity to lay his hands on the weakest points of others so that he might impose his own supremacy on them. He adroitly took advantage of the domestic quarrels of the Angres, Sambhaji and Manaji, to the satisfaction of Brahmendra Swami who hated the Angres and brought that powerful family to the verge of ruin. Baji Rao divided the authority and possessions between the rivals and this division [31] weakened the strength and resources of the Angres. It was by this method as well as by the defeat of the Siddis that the Peshwa attained to his unquestioned power in the Konkan. It was another thing that it was impossible to hope for peace and prosperity in the Konkan without bringing all the chiefs under the Peshwa's subjection.

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[25] Rajwade, Vol. III, Introduction, p. 30.
[26] *Life of Brahmendra Swami*, pp. 53-54.
[27] Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 71.
[28] *Ibid*, pp. 54-56.
[29] *Life of Brahmendra Swami*, p. 60.
[30] Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 73.

War between the Portuguese and the Marathas

When the Siddis and the Angres were reduced to insignificance, only the Portuguese power remained and their strength broken, the Peshwa would be free from all worry about the Konkan. By the end of the 17th century the power of the Portuguese was perceptibly declining. Their forcible conversions, stoppage of the Hindu religious practices, and demolition of Hindu temples had lost them, during their brief sway, the sympathy and loyalty of their Hindu subjects. Their religious bigotry and tyranny became so odious to the Hindus that they left their homelands in the Portuguese territory and sought shelter in Maharashtra. Of these, the patriotic and high-spirited Pathare Prabhus, headed by Gangaji and Babuji Naik were determined to bring about the destruction of the oppressors by appealing for aid to their King. The Peshwa readily undertook the reduction of the Portuguese but the operation against them had to be put off owing to a series of events that demanded the Peshwa's attention elsewhere. In 1730 at the suggestion of Antaji Raghunath and Ramchandra Raghunath, Desai and Deshpande of Malad in Bassein, Baji Rao, when comparatively free from his other preoccupations, sent an expedition against the hated tyrants. The decisive results of this campaign led to a temporary peace and further hostilities were stopped for some time. This ended the first phase.

The second phase opened with a change of viceroys at Goa. After the arrival of Conde De Sandomil, the new Viceroy, a policy of aggression against the Sawants of Wadi and of systematic persecution of the Hindus throughout the Portuguese dominions began.[32] The Portuguese took to building a strong fort at Thana in 1734. During the domestic quarrels of the Angres, first Manaji and then Sambhaji appealed to the Portuguese for help. But when an agreement was effected by the Peshwa's mediation between the Angres, another was formed between the Peshwa and the Portuguese. The latter agreed to allow the Marathas to establish a factory on the Salsette island on a site selected by the General of the North. At this time the General happened to be a hot-headed and tactless youth. When he was asked by Vyankatrao Joshi, Baji Rao's brother-in-law and Maratha envoy, to choose the site as per the late agreement he lost his temper and so far forgot himself that he called the fair and handsome Baji Rao a negro to the envoy's face in violation of all diplomatic etiquette and decorum. This insult infuriated the Marathas and Baji Rao now resolved on speedy revenge, made vigorous preparations with the greatest secrecy and swiftness. While the Maratha armies were gathering on the frontiers, the Commander of the North remained entirely ignorant and when warned by the English Governor returned a haughty reply "that when the barbarians came he would know how to receive them". The storm broke on the head of the stupid Commander of the North early in 1737 when he was not at all ready with his promised reception. The barbarians, not to be satisfied with the ordinary welcome, dashed into the half-finished fort of Thana (April 1737), swept off the Portuguese from their defences and captured the fort. Many Portuguese died fighting bravely but at day-break Chimnaji Appa hoisted the proudly-flying Maratha banner on the fort. One after another their outposts were taken; Salsette, Parsik Belapur, Dharavi, Arnala, and others were soon captured and the Marathas resolved on attacking their strongest fort at Bassein. Had the Marathas pressed their victory immediately they would have easily captured Bassein also, for at this time the Portuguese affairs there were in a disorderly condition. But in their anxiety to ascertain the internal condition of Bassein the Marathas delayed the attack and with the coming of the rainy season the campaign had to be closed. In the meantime the arrival of substantial armed help under a new Commander at Bassein revived the flagging spirit of the Portuguese. The Marathas on their part utilised the interval to enter the fort in disguise and notice the vulnerable points. When, therefore, the campaign was resumed the next cold season (1738) it found both the antagonists thoroughly prepared to test each other's prowess. The English Governor now ranged himself on the Maratha side and sold ammunition to them though outwardly he pleaded neutrality to the Portuguese when the latter requested English help. Chimnaji Appa was appointed the generalissimo of the whole Maratha army and took field at the head of a fine force about November 1738. His plan was a simultaneous general attack on the Portuguese possessions and cutting off of all supplies reaching them from outside. The Commander-in-Chief flooded the whole country from Daman to Div with his troops and supervised and directed all the operations in person. But the English whose policy was to see that the strength of both parties was weakened, again changed sides and supplied the Portuguese with provisions by sea, thus prolonging the campaign. After the capture of the surrounding country Bassein was subjected to a close and vigorous siege. At the same time Vyankatrao Ghorpade took Madgaon and marched on Goa, the Capital. The Governor, Count Sandomil, was hard put it to defend Goa and it was clear from the beginning that the Portuguese, with all their extreme measures like the conscription of even the monks, could not withstand the spirited attack. Alarming news began to pour in from all quarters. Versova, Karanjia, and Bandra were captured by the Marathas and the fight now raged furiously round the fort of Bassein. The Portuguese garrison admirably conducted the defence in the face of the repeated onslaughts of the determined Marathas. The city was doomed though the Portuguese were defending their position with the courage of despair. At last a Maratha envoy bearing a white flag told the Commandant that they would fire three fresh mines the next morning, carry the town by assault and put the Christian population to the sword. A Council of War was called and it was decided to make terms while that was yet possible. The heroic resistance of the garrison evoked generosity from the Maratha conquerors. They allowed them eight days in which to leave Bassein with the honours of war.[33] Never before or after did the Marathas display "such extraordinary vigour, skill and perseverance". "The Firangis fought with genuine valour and exhibited true soldierly spirit," says Chimnaji and rightly does he think that the fight was unparalleled in the history of the Marathas. An honourable peace closed the campaign and it must be said to the credit of the Marathas that "they faithfully observed all the conditions of the capitulation".[34] The siege of Goa was also pressed on with vigour by Vyankatrao and the Governor thought it wise to sign a peace (April 1739) promising to pay 40 per cent of the royal revenue to the Marathas as annual tribute and an indemnity of one million and six hundred thousand Xerafins.

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[31] Rajwade, Vol. II, pp. 71-72.

[32] *Life of Brahmendra Swami*, pp. 62-67 (Marathi).

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[33] For the Maratha account of the siege refer to Chimani Appa's letter dated 13th May 1739 to Brahmendra Swami—Translated in *Rise of the Peshwas* by H. N. Sinha, pp. 169-172.

The war entirely broke the power and prestige of the Portuguese on the west coast and left the Marathas masters of the situation. The English were at this period insignificant without many acquisitions on land. They were anxious to keep friendly relations with the strong Maratha State and were glad to enter into an alliance with the Marathas by which they were granted free trade throughout the Maratha Kingdom. The power of the Marathas now rose beyond all comprehension and the Peshwa's supremacy was completely established. During the six years (1733-39) the Siddis were worsted, the Angres were broken and the Portuguese all but annihilated.

The invasion of Nadir Shah was the last political episode that claimed Baji Rao's attention. The Emperor of Persia had swept through Kabul and Punjab like a hurricane and had entered Delhi in February 1739. The miserable fate of the proud Imperial Capital and its inhabitants, and the devastations of the country through which he had passed served as a warning to Baji Rao and he did not move beyond Khandesh. It was rumoured that Nadir Shah wanted to chastise the Marathas and intended an invasion of their country. This news threw Shahu into a state of consternation but Baji Rao, conscious of his strength, remained confidently unperturbed. He made vigorous preparations to meet the invader of his country and indeed so vast were his resources that though the campaign against the Portuguese was in full swing he hoped to get together another vast army for the defence of the Maratha State. But Nadir

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[34] Danvers: *History of the Portuguese*, Vol. II, p. 412.

Shah soon afterwards left Delhi and he was free from the whole trouble.

Before his death Baji Rao enforced on Nasir Jung, the Nizam's son, one of the conditions of the treaty of Mungi-Shegaon by which the Nizam had promised a personal jahagir to the Peshwa and which he had not yet fulfilled. He forced Nasir Jung at the point of the bayonet to grant the districts of Hardia and Khargaon, south of Indore, to him. When he was touring through his jahagirs he was suddenly taken ill at Raver on the banks of the Narmada and expired on the 25th April 1740. Exhausted by constant exertions, broken in health, and disappointed towards the end of his life in his unquenchable love for Mastani, he died at the comparatively young age of forty-two.

Thus died one of the greatest personalities of the Maratha history, certainly the greatest of the Peshwas. The loyal Mastani, the accomplished and charming companion of his later days went sati. "Separated from her lover in this world she passed fearlessly through the flames to greet him in the next." Bravest of the brave, fairest of the fair, Baji Rao died like a most fascinating figure in the romance of love. The twenty years of his rule were a period of ceaseless activity, of wars and conquests during which he compelled the wily Nizam to resign the whole country between the Chambal and the Narmada, and wore down all opposition to his absolute sway in the Konkan. At home his rivals had been silenced and they had been forced to submit to the inevitable ascendency of the Peshwa. His great abilities as a first-class general and soldier had borne fruit after a strenuous struggle for nearly fifteen years. The Maratha authority in Gujrat, Malwa, and Bundelkhand had been recognised; the conquests had indeed been made but the work of consolidation was yet to begin.

Nana Saheb becomes Peshwa

Shahu invested the eldest son of the late Peshwa, Nana Saheb with the insignia of his father's office in June 1740. He had been brought up under the paternal care of his uncle Chimnaji Appa. He had been carefully trained in all the affairs of the state and had received a fair share of martial training though without much practical experience. Hence Nana Saheb proved no great soldier like his distinguished father but was a greater statesman from his early experiences of matters exclusively diplomatic. Loveable by nature and universally liked, the path of the young Peshwa was yet made more difficult by the death of his uncle which followed soon after that of his father. The death of Chimnaji Appa, who had wide experiences, great military abilities, persuasive speech and winsome and tactful manners, was a great blow to the rising importance of the Peshwa.

Nana Saheb's succession to office was not secured without opposition. The violent rivalries and personal dissensions of the Sirdars found expression as usual on this occasion also. Raghuji Bhonsle wanted to have his own partisan into office of the Peshwa as a guarantee of the future adoption of one of his sons when the childless king would die. He thereupon ran a worthless man, Babuji Naik, as a rival candidate. But owing to the inherent good sense of Shahu, which never failed him in such cases, his tender sympathy[35] for the young son of Baji Rao, and his apprehension of danger and disobedience from the old nobles of the state, Raghuji's intrigues did not receive any encouragement from the King. In his decision Shahu was supported by the Pratinidhi[36] who was the bitter enemy of Raghuji, nor did the choice fall on an incompetent person. On the occasion of his appointment Shahu assigned the following instruction in regard to the State policy and charged him to carry it to a successful issue. "After Balaji Pant, the Elder Baji Rao, achieved great deeds in the devoted service of the King. At length he started with a view to crush the Iranis and established an empire but his life was cut short. You are his son and you aught to consummate his policy of conquering the whole of Hindustan and establish an empire and lead your horse beyond Attock." The success[37] that Nana Saheb achieved in implementing his father's policy bears ample testimony to his own ability and Shahu's right choice. The appointment of Nana Saheb was a political necessity with which coincided the prestige and glory of Shahu and the family interest of the Peshwa. The National interest as much as the personal interest of the Peshwa and the King required the reins of government to be into the hands of a man of outstanding merit who would pursue the Imperialist ambitions of the previous minister to a logical conclusion and yet be loyal to the reigning monarch.

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[35] He got together all the principal nobles plus officers of the State and made them take an oath, pronouncing co-operation to the Peshwa. G. Duff, Vol. II, p. 4.

[36] Sardesai: *Life of Nana Saheb*, p. 8.

[37] *Life of Shau Maharaj the Elder* (Marathi), pp. 77-78.

And Nana Saheb as we shall see in the following narrative was, under the circumstances, the best available candidate, who combined personal devotion to the sovereign with a statesman's ability to pilot the expanding Maratha State through the shoals of internal jealousies and external opposition.

Nana Saheb's Regime till the Death of Shahu (1740-49)

The problem which urgently demanded his attention before he set his hand to the task of conquest was the breakdown of the finances of the State. Baji Rao's extensive campaigns had straightened the finances which had been already in a crippled condition owing to the Jahagirdari system and the inevitable sequestration of large portions of revenues arising from it. Baji Rao had not paid attention to these problems and they were left to his son for solution. Nana Saheb had to find money to the tune of 14 lakhs and a half which was the debt his father had incurred and which had worried him so much during his lifetime. Nana Saheb found the solution in the Karnatic which had been overrun by Raghuji Bhonsle in 1740. In 1741 Trichinopoly had been surrendered by Chanda Saheb who was brought to Satara and kept a prisoner till 1748. The Peshwa posted Murarirao Ghorpade at Trichinopoly to levy contributions from the surrounding country and to remit to him Rs. 20,000 a year from the revenue of Arcot. Mahadaji Purandare also paid off Babuji Naik, the creditor, and thereby saved the Peshwa from his harassment.[38] Further he got from Shahu on the plea of bad financial position the grant of all the country acquired from the Portuguese including Bassein and the revenue collection of all the country north of the Narmada except Gujrat.[39] Having thus obtained a fresh source of revenue, he proceeded to regulate the revenue collection of the State.

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[38] G. Duff, Vol. II, p. 5.
[39] Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 92.

When he felt comparatively free from the financial embarrassment, he directed all his efforts to securing the formal grant of Malwa from the Emperor in accordance with the treaty with his father. He opened negotiations with the Emperor through his friend Jaysingh and the Nizam now Vazier at Delhi. The latter was at first opposed to the grant of Malwa being confirmed upon Nana Saheb and had induced the Emperor to send his own Governor to that province ignoring the treaty of Durai Sarai. But latterly the rebellion of his son, Nasirjung, had made it necessary for the Nizam to cultivate the Peshwa's friendship and hence he withdrew his opposition. Nana Saheb also took care to back his diplomacy by an armed demonstration into Malwa. He occupied Garha and Mandla, the two chief outposts on the Narmada guarding the southern frontier of Malwa. These two outposts were by their natural position as important to the Peshwa as to Raghuji and their occupation caused a clash between the two.

During the last few years Raghuji had consolidated his power by conquering a large portion of Gondwan and by pushing his frontiers to the borders of Malwa. He had become of late so arrogant that he had not only defied the authority of Baji Rao but had also evaded the regular payment of his annual tribute and had treated even Shahu with scant courtesy. On account of his contumacy Baji Rao had intended an attack on him but it had been prevented by the invasion of Nadir Shah in 1739.[40] Thereafter he had added to his prestige by his successful Karnatic campaign and had boldly attempted to get his nominee appointed to the office of Peshwa. When this attempt proved abortive as we have previously seen he had taken opportunity to carry his arms to the province of Bengal to the east. The political convulsions that had brought Aliwarthi Khan to the government of Bengal favoured his ambitions and he had now invaded that province. Such was the state of affairs when the occupation of Garha and Mandla brought Nana Saheb and Raghuji, the two Sirdars of the same state face to face. To save himself from Raghuji's unwelcome attentions Aliwarthi Khan asked for Nana Saheb's help. At the same time the Emperor, too, apprised of the Maratha eruption into Bengal, applied to Nana Saheb for his aid and promised to confirm him in the government of Malwa. The opportunity was too golden to be missed; the Peshwa could pay off old scores under some show of legality and at the same time secure the Sanad for Malwa. The Peshwa attacked and defeated Raghuji's army and returned to Malwa to demand the Sanad. No reasonable excuse was now left for Mahomed Shah to withhold the grant any further but "to save the credit of the Imperial name", as Grant Duff remarks, "the feeble palliative of conferring the appointment on the Peshwa as the deputy of Prince Ahmed, the Emperor's son, was adopted at the suggestion of Jaisingh and Nizam-ul-Mulk through whom the transaction was concluded."[41]

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[40] Rajwade, Vol. II, p. 87.

When the Peshwa returned to Satara the conflict between him and Raghuji was settled through the mediation of the King. Their respective spheres of influence were defined and the Peshwa, because of the existence of a strong party against him at the Court, elected to resign Bengal to Raghuji rather than to have to fight the Maratha Chiefs. The object of this reconciliation was not so much an alliance as an agreement to avoid interference with each other. Thus once again the interference of Shahu made it impossible to build up a well-knit Confederacy.

In December 1746 the Peshwa ordered Sadashivrao Bhau to proceed on the 3rd Karnatic campaign. Baji Rao had an exclusive fascination for the north. Nana Saheb's object in looking personally into the affairs of the south unlike his father was to prevent Raghuji or Babuji Naik from establishing his control over a rich and fertile province like the Karnatic. With five Nawab Chiefs and two Maratha States of Tanjore and Gutti, the Karnatic was fast lapsing into a congeries of States which were at war with each other.

Though Baji Rao had given the Nizam a free hand in the Karnatic he had only a nominal authority over the province. To add to its unsettled state, the rivalry between the European Nations, the French and the English, had begun since 1740. When Baji Rao showed no inclination to lead an expedition into the Karnatic, Shahu had entrusted the work to Raghuji and Fattehsingh Bhonsley. Raghuji overran the whole country, ruthlessly plundered the inhabitants, marched upon Trichinopoly and invested Chanda Saheb closely in the fort. It was during this siege that Raghuji first sounded the French but the spirited reply soon convinced him that he would neither get money nor the surrender of Chanda Saheb's family. The utmost that Raghuji could extort from the French was a few bottles of French liquor. Impressed by the undaunted spirit of the French Governor who held himself ready to repel his attack Raghuji did not further molest the French. In the meantime Trichinopoly surrendered and Raghuji took Chanda Saheb as Maratha prisoner to Satara. Thus, the campaign succeeded in its immediate objective of freeing Pratap Sinha of Tanjore from the local rivalry of Chanda Saheb. This was one of the most remarkable expeditions of the Marathas into the Karnatic. The whole of the fertile territory between the Krishna and the Cavery had been swept and pillaged. Contributions had been received from the Nawab of Arcot, Raja of Tanjore, and other cities like Kudappa and Porto Novo. It increased the prestige of Raghuji in the eyes of his countrymen and so pleased was the King that he granted to Raghuji the country between Gondwana and Cuttock.

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[41] *History of the Marathas*, Vol. II, p. 15.

The establishment of the Marathas at Trichinopoly roused the old Nizam who had by this time suppressed the rebellion of his son, to prompt action. He led a vast army into the Karnatic and upset the work of the Marathas accomplished during Raghuji's campaign. The Nizam's preoccupation in the Karnatic and his long absence from the Deccan were the reason of his conciliatory conduct towards the Peshwa in aiding the latter's claim to the Government of Malwa. The Marathas, however, were too much occupied with their own schemes to think of taking advantage of the Nizam's absence. Raghuji Bhonsle was intent upon recovering his lost ground in Bengal where his own affairs on the treacherous murder of his agent and general Bhaskar Pant now demanded his personal attention. The Peshwa was gradually drifting into open hostility to Raghuji. Shahu had assigned the Karnatic Subha to Babuji Naik and it now fell to him to retrieve the Maratha position consequent on the Nizam's interference. Babuji led an expedition[42] into the Karnatic but it ended in total failure and his own complete ruin. Thus his rival's discomfiture made Nana Saheb's path clear. Back from his Bhilsa expedition he took up the affairs of the Karnatic into his own hands and sent, as noted above, Sadashivrao Bhau on the third expedition with the object of preventing Babuji Naik's entry into Karnatic again. Sadashivrao Bhau maintained the prestige of the Marathas, won a number of victories[43] and levied contribution as far as the Tungabhadra. One thing was certain that the Peshwa made a departure from his father's policy; he was resolved upon controlling the affairs of the Karnatic in the way in which he did those of the north. This expedition was the beginning of the new policy.

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[42] For the full account of the expedition see *Life of Shahu Maharaj the Elder*, pp. 110-111.

While the Peshwa's agents occupied Bundelkhand and Karnatic, other events happened about this time in northern India, the Deccan, and the Karnatic which were the precursors of great revolutions in every part of India. The period of 1747-48 is memorable in the history of the Northern India by its being the period of the first invasion of Ahmed Shah Abdalli, the king of the Afghans. The death of Nizam-ul-Mulk in 1748 threw the affairs at Hyderabad and Karnatic in a confusion. And the impending death of Shahu attracted the attention of the Marathas to that event and kept them busy with their domestic affairs.

Shahu's illness was a signal for a host of Court intrigues of rival factions which were forced to get their own nominees appointed as successor. The quarrels of the Ranis and the importunity of the king's money-lenders aggravated the situation. Everyone awaited the course of events at Satara in suspense and the result was that the hitherto rapid progress of the Maratha expansion in the north and the south was arrested for a few years till 1752. During this period the national affairs sank to the lowest depth of mean jealousies and worse intrigues, and no one except the Peshwa was found strong enough to control the situation. At the end of this period of suspense, therefore, the Peshwa alone, in spite of the perplexing situation, emerged more powerful than ever before and the natural head of the Maratha State in name as well as in fact.

During this gloomy period an interesting episode took place. The party hostile to the Peshwa consisting of the Pratinidhi, Raghuji Bhonsle, and Rani Sakwarbai taking full advantage of the troubled and restless condition of Shahu's mind got Nana

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[43] Sardesai: *M. Riyasat* (M. Vibhag), Vol. II, p. 97.

Saheb dismissed from office. They represented that the Peshwa was growing disloyal and defiant in his attitude towards the King for while the debt of the King had remained unpaid the Peshwa was actually becoming rich. While he seemed to be extremely busy with the affairs of the state he was indulging in carnal pleasures. The order of his sudden dismissal did not disturb the equanimity of the Peshwa's mind. He knew the working of the King's mind better than he knew it himself and therefore though everybody expected that he would compromise his position by rebelling against Shahu's authority he quietly sent back the insignia[44] of his office and submissively awaited further orders from the King. The clever Peshwa knew that this kind of outward obedience was all that was needed to humour Shahu and to induce him to reinstate him. The Peshwa's dismissal even if temporary brought out into bold relief the difficulties about his successor. None of the conspirators thought himself equal to the vast responsibilities of the office as none possessed the requisite ability or self-confidence and Shahu had to bestow the office again on Nana Saheb. The brief expulsion from office only served to tighten his hold on the King as well as the nobility and in the end it was the Peshwa who profited by this move. Another indirect result of the episode was the Newai expedition of Nana Saheb. He had got a glimpse of what was behind the King's mind when he threw the Peshwa out of office. It was the question of Shahu's debt which had lent a colouring of truth to the misrepresentations of his antagonists. The Newai expedition was undertaken partly to find means to pay off Shahu's debts and partly to settle the affairs of Hindustan. Complications had arisen out of a family quarrel between the two sons of Sawai Jaisingh after his death over the question of succession to the throne. Impelled by mercenary motives Jaiappa Shinde and Malharrao Holkar, took opposite sides. Thus began the harmful practice of taking sides in the Rajput quarrels by accepting heavy bribes from them. It destroyed the unity of the Confederacy, injured the reputation of the Marathas and made their name hateful to the Rajputs who were lately so sympathetic towards them. Rajputana was soon ravaged and the Rajputs who in their folly had courted the Maratha help found to their cost that the remedy was worse than the disease. The rivalry between the two powerful Maratha houses of Northern India began and later developments were bound to widen the breach between the Marathas and their quondam friends, the Rajputs. The Peshwa was powerless to prevent these developments in the Confederacy and had to content himself with the monetary gains of the expeditions.

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[44] *Life of Shahu Maharaj the Elder*, p. 118.

Shahu's last days were clouded by troubles and intrigues for the succession but before his death which occurred in December 1749 he handed over to the Peshwa a document of immense constitutional importance. It made the office of Peshwa hereditary and made him not only the head of civil government but also of the military. Believing in his ability Shahu by this instrument deliberately entrusted the Kingdom and its welfare to the Peshwa. None from Kolhapur was to succeed him. But in clearest terms Shahu made the Peshwa responsible for the continuance of the government and of the dynasty. It gave in effect the Peshwa, as the King's delegate, entire power over the Jahagirdars and in every instance of succession the right of investing the new Jahagirdar. Thus the document recognised the position of the Peshwa as the supreme authority in the State and gave it the sanction of legitimacy.

The Maratha Confederacy or the System of Feudatory States

Shahu's reign (1708-49) was a transitional period in the history of the Maratha State. From the centralised Monarchy that it was under Shivaji the Great it gradually came to become a system of decentralised Feudatory States. This transformation into an Empire based on feudal system had its origin in and was the inevitable result of the selfish individualist tendencies of the times. These injurious propensities had taken root, as we have already seen, during the War of Independence and the idea of an Empire was their logical sequel in the next reign of Shahu.

What were the internal and external circumstances which changed Monarchy into a loose Confederacy? Under Shivaji the Great, there was no system of Jahagirs; every officer of the State, Civil or Military, however distinguished might be his services, was paid in cash; neither were the offices hereditary.

Sambhaji did not make any radical departure from the system of government established by Shivaji the Great. During Rajaram's reign the exigencies of the situation led to a change in the governmental system. Hard pressed for money he was obliged to pursue a policy of systematic spoliation of the Mughal territories. To carry out this policy successfully he assigned different parts of the Deccan to different army leaders and each was to establish his headquarters in his apportioned part of the country and collect his revenue regularly as far as possible. Rajaram, then shut up at Jinji, could maintain his hold on his kingdom from the revenue which each Jahagirdar paid as his share. Each Sirdar, in the absence of regular government, was left to act on his own initiative and had to establish his sway by his own strength. The king used to grant only the formal Sanad and every successful leader used to consider the territory he had conquered and retained against the Mughal opposition, as his own Jahagir. The king did not grant them land which actually belonged to the State and hence the credit of subjugating the assigned territory went to the Sirdars. Thus from the very beginning the Jahagirdars were not moved to efforts in the direction of conquest by a sense of obedience of service to the State but by a strong feeling of self-interest. They paid only a lip homage to the King and his authority. The vicious character of this system originated from the perplexities of the times but it continued, perhaps with greater force, under Shahu.

When Shahu returned from his captivity some of these Jahagirdars—Sawants of Wadi, Kanhoji Angre, Damaji Thorat, Udaji Chavan, Krishnarao Khataokar, and others—taking advantage of his difficulties and helpless situation attached themselves to Tara Bai or to Shahu. All of them were actuated by selfish motives and wanted to get as much independent of the authority of their lawful suzerain, the King, as would be warranted by the unsettled conditions of the civil war. Afterwards when he was firmly seated on the throne he granted fresh Jahagirs to those who deserved them for their services and confirmed in their respective possessions those who tendered their allegiance. Assignment of large Jahagirs was the magic that procured the pacification of the country and conciliation of the nobles. Balaji Vishwanath far from being averse to the continuance of this system advised Shahu to resume it. And in this, it should not be forgotten, Balaji's motives were not altogether unselfish. Balaji's advice was dictated by personal interests for he wanted to increase the material resources and power of his family. He must have known that the hereditary Jahagirdari system would lead to hereditary offices, for the one is inseparable from the other. Thus it is that he not only created a feudatory system but also hereditary offices. It is no wonder therefore that many Sirdars like the Sawants of Wadi, Fattehsingh Bhonsle, Kanhoji Angre, Kanhoji Bhonsle, Khanderao Dabhade, the Pratinidhi, the Sachiv, the Mantri, and others received rich Jahagirs, the clever and useful Balaji getting as Peshwa the biggest of them all. It is no wonder that Balaji did not raise a finger to abolish the system. Thus the Jahagirdari system was confirmed because of Shahu's initial difficulties and weakness and the feudatory chiefs came to possess more resources and more power than their due and than what would square with Shahu's interests. Since the King, owing to the long civil war, depended upon them for support they were always more stiff-necked than they should otherwise have been. If for any reason the king did not satisfy their extravagant demands as happened in the case of Chandrasen Jadhav then they always deserted him and went over to his enemies, Tara Bai or Nizam from whom they were sure to get a bigger bribe, a bigger Jahagir.

To this was added the right of collecting the Chouth and Sardeshmukhi from the six Subhas of the Deccan. This ancient[45] right of the Marathas was finally recognised by the Emperor by a treaty in 1718 and ratified in 1719 and the Maratha King got the right of collecting the Chouth[46] and

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[45] Shivaji the Great had "claimed to be the hereditary Sardeshmukh of his country and had put forth his claim early in his career". As far back as 1668 Bijapur and Golkonda had agreed to pay an annual subsidy of three and five lakhs respectively to him in lieu of the Chouth and Sardeshmukhi. In 1671 he imposed these taxes on the Mughal territories. Towards the end of Aurangzeb's Deccan campaign, the Mughal officers made a secret compact with Maratha leaders to pay these taxes. After Shahu's arrival Daud Khan Panni started paying them but they were collected by his own officers; but in 1713 the hostile Nizam for a time put a stop to the practice. Then in 1718 the treaty with Syed Husenali recognised it. This in short is the previous history of these taxes. See Sinha: *Rise of the Peshwas*, p. 47.

[46] The Chouth was "a military contribution levied by a power without being in formal occupation of the country" and was equal to one-fourth of the Royal revenue. Sen: *Administrative System of the Marathas*, pp. 112-113.

Sardeshmukhi[47] from all the Mughal territories of the Deccan except "the Swarajya" districts, all the forts conquered by Shivaji the Great, and the Konkan.[48] The Marathas did not stop with this official recognition of their right. They had turned Aurangzeb's reverses and the weakness of the Empire after him to their own account and had levied them from some parts of Gujrat and Gondwana. On Balaji's return from Delhi the question that perplexed him was how to realise these taxes from widely scattered territories and at the same time to discharge the return-obligation of maintaining peace and order in those areas. Balaji distributed the territories among the various feudatory chiefs, the ministers of State, or his friends and made them answerable for the collection of the taxes. They were to retain a fixed part thereof for the upkeep of their establishment and forward the remainder to the Royal treasury. In their assigned territories, the Chieftains were practically independent except for the obligation of the regular payment of their respective share. Even this, the only condition of their subordination to their King, they could avoid by pleading that they had incurred heavy expenditure on account of the frequent wars. The Sirdars did not trouble themselves about the condition of the masses and fattened at the expense of the people as well as of the State. The Peshwa indeed made arrangements for the collection of the Maratha dues but not for the stipulated maintenance of peace and order for the country. They kept big establishments and besides had watan-lands in the "Swarajya". When this system of Balaji was later on employed on a bigger scale and with wider powers the State became a Confederacy.

The system of Jahagirs which brought into existence the powerful class of feudatory chiefs was then the first cause of the weakness of Monarchy under Shahu. We have already noticed how the difficulties of Shahu's position and his weakness of character contributed to the rise of this military aristocracy, in conjunction with the selfish individual tendencies which the necessity of the War of Independence had fostered in the ranks of the Maratha leaders.

The position of the Monarchy was further weakened by the complicated revenue arrangement of Balaji which was a necessary accompaniment of the feudatory system. The question was how the revenues collected by the Sirdars should be divided between the King and the Chiefs. A good many of the fief-holders had Watan lands in the Swarajya also. Out of the collections [49] from the Swarajya and the Mughal subhas the Bapti or 25 per cent were to be paid to the King for the maintenance of his dignity and office. Of the rest 75 per cent, that is, the Mokasa, the King could assign the Sahotra (i.e. 6 per cent) and Nadganda (3 per cent) to whomsoever he pleased. The remaining 66 per cent of the total collection went to the Sirdar himself for the establishment. Such a system [50] was liable to corruption and after a time it became irrevocable. Right divorced from responsibility soon led to excesses of all kinds and in all cases. Balaji did nothing towards discharging his agreed duty to maintain peace and order and thus the rapacity of the feudatories knew no control. He tried merely to put some artificial brakes to the ambitions of the Sirdars by controlling their revenue collection. According to his system the revenue officials of the King, the Chitnis, the Fadnis, and the Potnis appointed those of the Peshwa or Ashtapradhanas and the revenue officials of the Ashtapradhans appointed those of the other chiefs. These were to work under the different chiefs but officially they were not subordinate to the latter. In fact they were not under the direct control of the King or the Peshwa. This method like the Mughal system created co-ordinate authorities in the provinces so that they may act as a check on each other. The Mughal system worked well because the Diwan, the Revenue head and the Subhedar, the Military head, were, unlike the Maratha Sirdar, mere servants of the Grand Autocrat, the Mughal Emperor. The Maratha Government, however, was, as we have seen before, a decentralised Confederacy, not a centralised Monarchy. Shahu's Sirdars were not his humble servants but his friends and supporters. They wielded as men on the spot enormous powers and possessed great military strength. Further the Diwan was an official of a high rank [51] and the Mughal revenue system was a part of an organic system working in a well-settled and well-ordered territories. The Maratha revenue officials were inferior in status and the Maratha revenue administration, working in unsettled foreign lands was purely a feeding channel. The revenue officials therefore had always to serve as subordinate of the all-powerful feudal Barons who exercised sovereign authority within their fiefs. These officers called Darakdars had the exclusive right of keeping the accounts of the local feudatories and were not removable from their office except with the consent of the Central Departmental heads. Whatever their position in theory, in practice the feudal Baron could easily get an inconvenient Darakdar removed from his office. As checks they were useless; their position only placed into their hands the means of getting wealth for themselves. The confederate Sirdar usually put off submitting the accounts and even when irregularities were detected the offending feudatory could not be brought to account. His powerful position would always deter the central authority from taking strong measures against him. It required a strong King like Shivaji the Great if the system was to work well.

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[47] This was equal to 1/10 of the revenue.

[48] Rajwade, Vol. VIII, Document 78, pp. 102-108.

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[49] Sen: *Administrative System of the Marathas*, pp. 275-76.

[50] For a thorough discussion of this system see Sardesai: *M. Riyasat* (M. Vibhag), Vol. II, pp. 119-142.

[51] Sircar: *Mughal Administration*, pp. 32-38 & 62-63.

Balaji of course had an idea of maintaining a strong army to punish the refractory Sirdar. But even so great a general and a masterful personality as Baji Rao I found it difficult to enforce control of the central authority. His extreme measures against Dabhade failed to produce the desired effect. Similarly later Peshwas arrogated to themselves the office of Senapati but this move too did not solve the problem. The Peshwa's interference came to be resented by Sirdars like Bhonsle and its only effect was to worsen the situation and multiply the difficulties.

The King's position was still further weakened by the novel method of maintaining the royal establishment which was invented by Balaji Vishwanath. His scheme of revenue administration brought only 25 per cent of the dues into the royal treasury; 66 per cent of the collections never came to it. This was indeed a mischievous system of revenue administration. The annual revenues were directly disbursed without their ever coming into the treasury and without the King ever knowing the net income of the State. Neither the King nor even the Peshwa could have any control over it. Now Balaji made it a rule that the different establishments of the royal household should be maintained by monthly contributions from the

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Sirdars.[52] Thus by this injurious system the King's military power was gone and he became a pensioner of the feudatories in all but name.

Hence Mr. Sinha aptly remarks, "The discredit of having thus undermined the strength of the royal authority goes to Balaji Vishwanath." [53]

Beginning of the Imperial Policy

If the treaty of 1718-19 assisted greatly in the process of the transformation of the Maratha Monarchy into the Confederacy or the feudatory system, it also was the beginning of the Maratha Imperialist polity. Balaji thereby secured for the Maratha State a sphere of influence which was the precursor of the Maratha Empire. The collection of the tribute defined their sphere of influence and gradually tightened their grip on the country subject to the payment of the taxes. The Emperor, in his ignorance of the consequences, no doubt purchased immunity from immediate troubles but by the grant of these rights he resigned to the Marathas a part of his sovereignty, i.e. preservation of peace and order. With the decay of the Mughal Empire this sphere of influence went on widening under each successive Peshwa. The British made a similar beginning in Bengal. But unlike the British the Marathas never evinced a willingness to shoulder the responsibilities resting on them. The Marathas could not have possibly done so, as long as the territories concerned had not come under their complete sway. This unsatisfactory state of affairs was perforce bound to continue so long as the Mughal Subhedar was there who was primarily responsible for peace and order in the Subha. How could the Marathas attempt to do it with divided responsibility and with divided revenues? It is however a fact that the defects did not make themselves manifest during Balaji's lifetime. By throwing forward a sphere of influence Balaji only made a humble beginning and wisely left the scheme of founding an Empire to others more fit to undertake the business. He had no scheme of establishing by conquest an Empire on the ruins of the Mughal Empire. That work was the special glory of his son, Baji Rao I. Balaji himself had neither the resources nor the generalship required for such an ambitious project.

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[52] The officer appointed to see whether the Sirdars sent their contributions regularly was called Rajanya.

[53] *Rise of the Peshwas*, p. 52.

Baji Rao's Achievements

Balaji's visit to the Capital of the Mughal Empire, not as a mercenary but as an ally of the King-makers, brought to the notice of the Marathas for the first time the rotten condition of the Mughal Empire. This discovery led to far-reaching consequences in their history. Young and ambitious Baji Rao I who had accompanied his father there, must have dreamt of his conquests and the Hindu-Pad-Padshahi at this time. When he succeeded his father as Peshwa he at once stood for a policy of conquest irrespective of Shahu's servile veneration for the Emperor. The Mughal Empire lay ready at hand, rotten to the core and simply waiting to be overthrown. He, therefore, urged his king to "strike the withered trunk when the branches will fall of themselves" and being more capable and more astute than his father his forward policy achieved success. His policy took shape out of the hazy notions of Balaji and the son's achievements duly completed the work begun by the father. The success of his dream was due to his personal qualities as a general and as a statesman, the decline of the Mughal Empire, and the friendly co-operation of the Hindu Rajputs. As G. Duff remarks he had both the head to plan and the hand to execute.[54] There can be no doubt that Baji Rao I was, after Shivaji the Great, by far the ablest personality in the Maratha history. "He was a warrior, born and bred in camps; a statesman educated ably by his father, a man frank and free, hardy beyond measure, most content to live on a handful of unhusked grain, vital to the finger tips."[55] Second only to Shivaji the Great, Baji Rao had no match in his age in the guerilla warfare. Like the Great King he inspired his soldiers with confidence, commanded their loyalty and led them from victory to victory. The chief factors in his military successes were mobility and guerilla tactics. His veterans inspired so much terror that with their aid he was able to assert his supremacy both over his domestic and foreign enemies. If he

[54] *History of the Marathas*, p. 410.
[55] Flora A. Steel: *India Through the Ages*, p. 237.

was the greatest commander of his times, as a statesman he stands head and shoulders above his contemporaries in Maharashtra.

(i) *His Policy of Maratha Expansion*

Baji Rao's policy of conquest and expansion did not at first find favour with the King. Brought up in the Mughal camp with kindness Shahu was always grateful to the Emperor and was averse to annexing his territory. The party of Pratinidhi Shripatrao also opposed the policy but on other grounds. The latter's peace-party would fain have paused to consolidate what had already been won, to suppress civil discord and generally to give a firm administrative grip on the south of India before attempting further conquests in the North. But Baji Rao I was clear-sighted; he saw the difficulties of this policy. To attempt consolidation work meant the remoulding of Balaji's system of collection of the Chouth and Sardeshmukhi from the Deccan, Gondwana, and Gujrat and that could hardly be done without incurring implacable hostility of all the other feudatories whose personal interests would have been touched. It would have led as sure as anything to civil war as the Maratha Society was not ripe for such a measure at that particular time. The only other alternative was to conquer the whole of the Chouth and Sardeshmukhi areas, i.e. the Nizam's dominions and Gondwana and bring them under a regular government. This was also well-nigh impossible. The Nizam was the most astute as well as the most powerful of the enemies of the Marathas. It would have been the height of folly to try to conquer the Deccan when Maharashtra was torn by factions and when the enemy was not wanting either in resources or in capacity. Besides the right of collecting Chouth and Sardeshmukhi had already been secured over the Deccan. Neither could his second object of bringing vast wealth to his country have been fulfilled by the conquest of the ruined subhas. On the contrary the provinces of Malwa, Gujrat, and Bundelkhand lay defenceless and held out promises of immense riches.

The second objection to his opponent's policy of peace and consolidation was that the Nizam, the inveterate enemy of the Maratha State, would never have given it the necessary peace if the Marathas had decided to remain on the defensive. He would have tried to foment internal dissensions and utilised them to strengthen his own position as the independent ruler of the Deccan. Further the Nizam would have been the last man to surrender Karnatic at that moment. Thus in any case war was inevitable. Then again to attempt the consolidation of what was still absolutely fluid, to bid the bands of predatory horsemen who constituted the Maratha army suddenly exchange their lances for ploughshares would have been fatal. For these reasons the peace-cum-consolidation policy was impracticable at that particular time.

On the other hand the only chance of peace was to form a regular army out of the Maratha hordes, to give that army work to do and thus to establish a stern military control as the first and most necessary step towards a fixed government. Foreign aggression, he hoped, would divert the attention of the people from their internal feuds to united action abroad and would thus promote unity at home. It would enrich his country. But these pious hopes were not fulfilled partly by the avowedly hostile attitude of the Maratha chieftains and partly by his own untimely death.

For these considerations Baji Rao's policy was the best under the circumstances and in the end he carried the day by converting the king to his view with his eloquence.

(ii) *His Policy towards the Maratha Confederacy*

In embarking upon a policy of conquest Baji Rao I had thought that he would be able to divert the attention of the Marathas from their domestic quarrels to united action in the new work of territorial expansion. But his victories in Malwa and Bundelkhand only whetted the jealousy of his opponents who offered him nothing but factious opposition. Raghuji Bhonsle, Dabhade, and the Pratinidhi became his personal enemies and it was hopeless to rely upon their co-operation in carrying his grand plans to success. He therefore followed a policy of pure domination towards the Maratha Confederacy. He first increased his prestige by his brilliant victories abroad and with his enhanced prestige he put down opposition at home. He aimed at subjecting the other members of the Confederacy to his absolute control both in their internal and external relations. He wanted to be the grand arbiter as regards their internal relations and was eager to interfere in their affairs as in the case of the Angres, often to the prejudice of their own interests and to the furtherance of his own. He wanted as well to subject their relations with foreign powers to his own scrutiny. In other words his ambition was to regulate the home and foreign policy of the Marathas as the Peshwa, as the central authority. If he had succeeded in this policy the result would have been to make Baji Rao I virtually the King of the Marathas. No doubt concentration of supreme authority in the hands of one man was, as Baji Rao rightly held, necessary for the success of the new policy of conquest. It would have been a good thing for the Maratha State if Baji Rao had been less selfish and more public spirited, less domineering and more diplomatic and if thereby he had convinced other members of his *bona fides*. But Baji Rao linked his personal and dynastic interests to what was obviously a good state policy and thus rendered the latter unacceptable to the other chieftains. As it was, his attempt to assume the supreme direction of the affairs of the State created bitterness and enemity and deprived him of the help from other members and ruined the chances of speedy success in his conquests. In this Baji Rao was not wholly to blame. He was the ablest of them all and as such he was more qualified than others for the role of a first Minister. Divided authority meant weakness for the State and unity of command was essential for unity of plans and co-ordination of national efforts at conquests. Besides he was the only man who would have done justice to all interests alike including his own and yet advanced those of the State. In fact considering the imbecility of Shahu, the mutual jealousies and rancour of the feudal Barons, their self-centred interests and incapacity for shouldering the onerous burden of the State, that would have been the only beneficial policy to follow in the larger interests of the State as well as the Confederacy as a whole. But his outstanding qualities, the unshakable confidence of Shahu in him and the brilliant results of his bold policy were an eye-sore to his jealous antagonists and they soon became his avowed enemies. Naturally when Baji Rao found that his co-workers would not willingly accept his supremacy, though desirable from the national point of view, and would not unite in a common cause but would like to pursue their own selfish ends, he made up his mind to bring them under his control by force. In this matter he had the full support of the King whose one anxiety was that the other Sirdars should not be wiped out of existence. Assured of Baji Rao's good faith on this point and also of his loyalty to himself, Shahu was not opposed to keep the turbulent nobles under the firm rule of his Chief Minister. The Pratinidhi and the Angres were completely humbled and Dabhade was killed at Dabhai. But this forcible imposition of his ascendency on others cost the State the loss of a good amount of energy of the best general and the result was Baji Rao did not make any conquests and annex any territory to the Maratha Kingdom during his lifetime. He overran the provinces, defeated and humiliated the Mughal governors and levied Chouth and Sardeshmukhi from them but found no time to make the annexations thereof. He could only expand the sphere of Maratha influence in Malwa, Gujrat, and Bundelkhand. Baji Rao only paved the way for their real conquest which was done under the later Peshwas. The Imperial policy initiated by Baji Rao made the Maratha State an Empire in due course. It was the case of the flag following the Chouth and the Sardeshmukhi. But in the successful execution of the forward policy there were two factors besides the inherent strength of the Marathas and the leadership of Baji Rao. The one was the rapid disintegration of the Mughal Empire and the other was the friendship of the Rajputs who favoured the Maratha cause as the cause of the Hindus.

Shahu and the Rise of the Peshwas

Shahu was kind, generous, God-fearing and religious-minded. Brought up in the Mughal Zenana in his early youth he became easy-going in after-life and possessed neither the strength of will nor the cunning of the statesman to control the critical situations. But he had the rare gift of judging men and affairs extremely accurately. When he found Balaji and Baji Rao I to be capable men, he appointed them to the Peshwaship and never hesitated to support them fully. Shahu was a weak ruler and no general. Yet weak as he was, he was not a figure-head in the Maratha affairs which, as some historians seem to think, were entirely under the control of the Peshwas. He asserted his authority twice in effecting the settlements (i) between the Peshwa and the Dabhade and (ii) the Peshwa and Raghuji. On both the occasions his interference was not in the interest of the Peshwa but his decision in both cases was final and had to be accepted. No Sirdar dared to disobey his orders so long as he lived. Powerful as the Peshwas had grown, though they had combined the offices of the Senapati and the Chief Minister in their own hands and thus had become indispensable to Shahu, yet they could not defy his Royal authority. The prestige of the King as the head of the State was yet great and hence the usurpation of the central authority in the Maratha Confederacy could not come in his lifetime. The Peshwas were perfectly submissive as was seen when he dismissed, if only temporarily, Nana Saheb from Office and used to render accounts to him periodically about their receipts, disbursements, and balances. It was only when his successor Ram Raja sank, in his position as King, into insignificance that the Peshwas assumed openly regal airs and the headship of the Maratha Confederacy. Shahu was to the last the sovereign of the Marathas and the central head of the Confederacy though the Peshwas had gradually consolidated their position during his reign and were in a position to occupy that place for themselves.

We have already seen some of the causes of the progressive deterioration of the King's power in the Maratha State. The establishment of the system of feudatory States, the complete revenue arrangement of Balaji and the successful prosecution of the Imperial policy by Baji Rao I tended to produce the same result. His brilliant victories at once gave him a tremendous prestige and secured for him supremacy in the internal affairs of the Confederacy. His victory at Dabhai left him "with all but nominal control of the Maratha Sovereignty". This increase in the power and prestige of the Peshwa was inevitable so long as Shahu, not being a general himself, could not have conducted the campaigns in person. Baji Rao alone could carry the new policy of conquest to a successful issue. Power brought with it material resources and to the jahagirs which had been granted to Balaji from time to time for his eminent services to the King and which were already vast, Baji Rao added others, the fruits of his military genius. Thus the first two Peshwas by the sheer force of their ability carved out an important position for themselves in the state. When the son of Baji Rao also proved capable the Peshwas' case for primacy in the state was complete. Naturally after Shahu's death the supreme direction of the National affairs came into their hands. This transfer of the Central authority from the Bhonsle family to the Brahmin Bhat family has come to be styled as "usurpation" by the Brahmins of the royal functions. The rise of the Peshwas therefore is the second landmark of Shahu's reign, the first being the formation of the Confederacy or the feudatory system.

The difficulties of Shahu, his weak character, and the great political unrest of Maharashtra are the chief factors in the rise of the Peshwas. Their rise is neither sudden nor accidental. They gradually worked their way up from a humble position to the headship of the state and eventually to *de facto* sovereignty. The growth of their power was the logical result of the compulsion of circumstances. To start with they occupied a rank second to that of the Pratinidhi. The Pratinidhi or any of the other ministers was not found competent to shoulder the responsibility of the state and Shahu had to turn to Balaji for the help he needed in his critical moment. Balaji justified the King's choice and partly out of gratitude for his loyal services the office was conferred on his son. If Balaji Vishwanath was selfish it must be admitted that he was loyal and devoted to Shahu. Baji Rao I, too, though slightly more defiant in his attitude to the King was sincerely loyal. He had to reckon with the personal opposition of the Pratinidhi but again the Peshwa was the most able officer of Shahu and hence Shripatrao had always to play a second fiddle to Baji Rao

His son and successor Nana Saheb also was a capable Peshwa and this was conclusively proved when Shahu could not find anyone else to accept the Peshwaship after his dismissal from office. The episode of Nana Saheb's removal from office though only for a few days convinced the dying king that the Peshwa alone was competent to manage the Maratha Empire after his death. Shahu, therefore, handed over to Nana Saheb an instrument consigning the state affairs to his sole charge. It was this document that legalises the Peshwa's "usurpation". Whatever

Nana Saheb's selfish designs for the future, he was like the first two Peshwas, loyal to Shahu. Thus the Bhat family alone was found to possess vitality to produce three Peshwas in succession who were the ablest men of their respective times and the most loyal servants of their King. That is why Shahu set aside the pretensions of Pratinidhi and Raghuji Bhonsle and lent a helping hand to the Peshwas first to make their office hereditary and then to increase their power in the state. In fact the interests of the King and Minister were for the time being identical. They had first to make their position supreme in the state by eclipsing the Pratinidhi and the other nobles and once supreme in the state the weak king had automatically to yield place to them. And all this they achieved by their superior ability and undoubted loyalty to their king. Their selfishness was equal to that of their contemporaries but their abilities both civil and military achieved success for the state and brought glory to the Maratha people. If they had not "usurped" some other family would have, and rendered the circumstances to selfish account; they at least served the cause of their country so conspicuously and with so much benefit to their people. It is a remarkable fact that "this transfer of authority from the master to the servant is so gradually, silently, carefully accomplished that the successive steps, important as they were in their relation to the whole move, escaped all the contemporary notice."[56]

In this chapter we have deliberately explained in details the causes of the establishment of the Confederacy, the inception of the Imperial policy, and the Monarchy and the rise of the Peshwas. It now remains for us to see the actual working of the feudatory system, with its external achievements till its final breakdown and dissolution at the hands of an alien nation—the British—and this we shall do in the next chapter.

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[56] Sen: *Administrative System of the Marathas*, p. 198.

CHAPTER VII

THE EMPIRE UNDER THE LATER PESHWAS—WORKING OF STASIS AND FALL OF THE EMPIRE

THE feudatory system of Confederacy was now established and the Peshwa, already too strong in the reign of Shahu, automatically became in the reign of the imbecile Ram Raja the national Head of the Marathas and henceforth Poona became the capital of the Empire. We have already noticed the beginning of the Empire and the tendency of the individual members of the Confederacy to play for their own game, and their mutual jealousies and rivalries. Shinde, Holkar, Gaikwad, Bhosle, Pawar and the Peshwa were the original members of the Maratha Confederacy and to these bigger feudatory States, other smaller jahagirdars in the southern Maratha country came to be added. The southern jahagirdars and the Peshwa were Brahmin while the rest were Maratha. The Peshwa being the strongest and the ablest was the acknowledged Head of the Confederacy and under his hegemony the Empire grew to its farthest limits till at last it received a serious set-back at Panipat. The dying Mughal Empire gave an opportunity to the different provincial governors to set up independent Kingdoms, each on his own account and the list of these potentates would be complete with the addition of the English and the ruler of Mysore. The Marathas alone aspired to build up an Empire on the ruins of the Mughal Empire and they had nearly succeeded in bringing practically the whole of India under their direct or indirect control when the English, who had established themselves in India as one of the sovereigns, began to consolidate their position and to compete for the prize of the Indian Empire. The final fight for mastery took place between the Marathas and the English and the former being defeated, India became " Red " instead of " Orange ".

The growth of the Maratha Empire and its external relations will claim our attention in this chapter but along with it we must also review the internal relations between the different members of the Confederacy. Their mutual relations had a strong influence on the external progress of the Empire and its ultimate dissolution. The later history of the Maratha Empire is the history of the separate feudatory States and their internal history is the old story of domestic dissensions.

To the last the National outlook was retained but with varying strength and the National spirit was an ever diminishing sentiment. The mutual quarrels of the individual members were complicated by the disputes of rival claimants to the succession to the same State until at last Raghoba, one of the parties aspiring to succeed to the Peshwa's Gadi, invited English help and thus the astute foreigners got for the first time an excuse to intervene in the internal affairs of the central authority. The English fully utilised their chance, to play upon the mutual jealousies of the Maratha war-lords and to widen the breach. They skilfully turned the accentuated differences of the Marathas to their own account and when the opportune moment arrived they delivered the military blow and the weakened Confederacy was overthrown. Thus the civil war at Poona hastened the downfall of the Maratha Empire. Not that the English would not have conquered the Marathas but for the civil war. So long as the members of the Maratha Confederacy were disunited and so long as the defects of the Maratha social organisation remained, so long were the English, with their superior social strength, bound to get an upper hand in the Indian politics. Raghoba's intrigues and the civil war only made matters more easy inasmuch as the central authority was paralysed and in the absence of a vigorous central authority the scattered strength of the Maratha Nation could not be directed, with determination and with oneness of purpose, against the English menace.

We must, therefore, fix our attention in this chapter on two features of the Maratha History: (1) the development of the Empire; (2) the working of the Internal stasis. Both had begun in the reign of Shahu as we have seen before.

The Peshwa becomes the Supreme Central Authority

To resume the narrative. The personality of Shahu, weak and indolent as he was, counted as a real force in the Maratha politics. He was the symbol of the Unity of the Confederacy and though each member ruled more or less in virtual independence yet all of them had to obey the commands of the King. His authority was more personal than official. The real power, however, had passed to the Peshwa and it was he who was now to step into the vacant office of Kingship. So long as Shahu lived Nanasaheb dared not assume the Kingly airs. But after him ensued a period of turmoil and trouble, the reign of a worthless youth who had to spend his life in prison and leave the Peshwa supreme in the State.

After Shahu's death, Tara Bai's grandson Ram Raja was crowned King and this fact put an end to all intrigues about the succession. Still the situation was difficult for the Peshwa but he handled it with such consummate diplomacy and showed such commendable promptitude on this occasion that he soon got his own way in the State affairs. He secured Raghuji Bhosle in his favour by making concessions. He took over by an artifice the fortress of Sinhgad from the Pant Sachiv. The Pratinidhi was deprived of his office and his lands were confiscated. Only Tara Bai and her intrigues remained to be dealt with. She took forcible possession of her grandson, the King, and threw him into a dungeon. Ram Raja and his descendants remained prisoners in Satara Fort for sixty-eight years,[1] their release being effected in the end by the coming of a foreign power. The Peshwa has sometimes been blamed for having deposed the heir of Shivaji the Great, but it must be admitted that he picked the crown out of the gutter and not from anybody's brow. Whosoever's may the fault be, the imprisonment of Ram Raja put an inglorious end to the rule of the Bhonsle family and, as Kincaid and Parasnis put it, the Chitpavan epic began.[2]

In the late monsoon of 1750 the Peshwa invaded the Nizam's territories with the intention of bringing them under the Maratha control. When he was busy with this campaign he was called back to Poona by the Women's war. Tara Bai and Umabai Dabhade supported by Damaji Gaikwad made an attempt to supersede his authority. Returning with lightning rapidity Nana Saheb treacherously seized Damaji and forced him to yield to his own demands.

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[1] Kincaid & Parasnis, p. 301.

[2] *Ibid.*

Soon after, the Peshwa with Damaji's help finally reduced Ahmedabad and thereafter the town remained in the undisturbed possession of the Marathas. Tara Bai, too, perceiving the hopelessness of resistance came to an understanding with the Peshwa by which the control of the Raja's person and establishment at Satara was placed at her disposal. Tara Bai further declared on oath that Ram Raja was not her grandson but a gondhali and an imposter. Nana Saheb affected to believe this statement as there was now no need for him to take steps to obtain Ram Raja's release. Thus the Peshwa skilfully transferred the odium of the King's imprisonment on Tara Bai's shoulders. The Peshwa was henceforth left the undisputed master of the Maratha Empire.

After the happy termination of the Women's war and after composing his domestic quarrel with Sadashivrao Bhau by appointing the latter his Dewan, the Peshwa renewed his interrupted war with the Nizam, Salabat Jung and in spite of De Bussy's genius and the French valour, acquired the Fort of Trimbak and the whole country west of Berar from the Tapti to the Godawari. (Treaty of Bhalki, 1752.)

Tulaji Angre who disavowed the Peshwa's authority, used to plunder or seize all ships not bearing his passport and even to levy contributions from the Peshwa's own territories. He had become a powerful chief with his thirty thousand infantry, numerous artillery manned by European gunners and sixty warships which were the terror of the Indian Ocean. He had rendered himself obnoxious to Ramaji Mahadev Biwalkar, the Subhedar of the Konkan, whose particular duty it was to collect the tribute from Angre. Tulaji would withhold the tribute and cut off the noses of the men sent to collect it. He had thus called feelings of resentment against himself into existence and these were favoured by Brahmendra Swami who was the creditor of Angre.[3] Brahmendra whose debt had not been paid, threatened Tulaji that the Peshwa would punish him for the non-payment[4] and encouraged the Peshwa to ruin him. But to punish him was impossible so long as he held the great naval forts of Suvarnadurg and Vijayadurg. And Ramaji Mahadeo set to work to unite in a league against Tulaji, his brother Manaji, the English and the Peshwa. The English were too glad to render assistance in such a promising enterprise against their powerful enemy whose house had so heroically disputed their supremacy of the Sea.

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[3] Parasnis, *Brahmendra Swami*, Doc. No. 322.

[4] Rajwade, Vol. III, Doc. No. 355.

Accordingly in March 1755 a treaty was signed by the English and the Marathas by which it was agreed that the vessels that might be taken from Angre were to be divided by the captors but the guns and stores were to belong entirely to the Peshwa. Bankote with the fort of Himatgad and the sovereignty of the river on which it stands with five villages were to be ceded in perpetuity to the English.[5]

Suvarnadurg and Vijayadurg were captured and the whole fleet of Angre was destroyed. Tulaji was also taken and was sent to spend the rest of his life in captivity in one of the Peshwa's hill-forts. The Peshwa annexed his lands. The English whose reprehensible conduct was seen in their appropriation of the immense prize property without reference to the interests of their allies, now tried to retain possession of Vijayadurg in exchange of the promised Bankote. But the Marathas peremptorily refused to accept the offer of exchange and after a good deal of higgling over the question the English, seeing that they were not in a position to keep the fort by strength of arms, promised to restore it and take Bankote and the surrounding territory instead. This was the first territorial acquisition of the English in Maharashtra. By the destruction of the sea-power of Angre, nobody profited except the enemies of the Maratha Nation. Nana Saheb behaved in a most unstatesmanlike and unpatriotic manner in suppressing a refractory vassal with the foreigner's help. To take enemy help in domestic quarrels, even if temporarily advantageous, has always proved in the end, disastrous. In forgetting this historical fact Nana Saheb committed an unpardonable sin for which the Maratha Nation had to pay very dearly afterwards.

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[5] G. Duff, Vol. II (p. 995) (Treaty of Poona).

Nana Saheb's Triumph over De Bussy

Having struck at the old trunk the branches were now falling one by one as expected by Baji Rao I and Nana Saheb now resolved to gather them. The conquest of the Deccan and Karnatic was therefore the watchword of the Peshwa and the army. Had Ghaziuddin lived and sat on the throne with the Maratha aid, the Peshwa would have surely achieved his goal. But the assassination of Ghaziuddin deprived the Marathas of a good instrument of satisfying their ambitions. Another trouble was De Bussy's ascendency at the Nizam's Court. His trained artillery and infantry whose value had been shown in the Bhalki campaign (1751) stood solidly behind Salabat Jung. To get the aid of Bussy from Hyderabad therefore became the first objective of the astute Peshwa. So long as he remained supreme at Hyderabad there was little prospect of the Marathas making any progress in their schemes.

In 1753 Bussy was forced to leave Hyderabad for Masulipatam owing to a severe illness and his absence from the Deccan afforded Sayad Laskar Khan, Nizam's prime minister and the Peshwa an opportunity to carry on intrigues for the entire removal of the Europeans from Hyderabad. The prime minister artfully detached the French corps and persuaded his master Salabat Jung to return to Aurangabad so as to be away from Bussy and nearer to the Peshwa. But at the news of this danger to the French Cause, Bussy, as soon as he could travel, collected his troops and repaired to Aurangabad. He procured the dismissal of Sayad Laskar Khan and made himself independent of Salabat Jung by requiring him to cede to himself a great tract of land known as Northern Sirkars for the maintenance of the French Troops. The removal of Sayad Laskar Khan from the office of Prime Minister and the appointment of Shah Nawaz Khan in his place baffled the Peshwa but he lost no time in entering into close relations with the new minister. Shah Nawaz Khan hated the French as bitterly as the Sayad. The Peshwa's policy was further aided by the French recognition of Mahomedalli, the English nominee. The Nizam was vexed beyond measure at this recognition of his enemy as the occupant of one of his own vassal thrones without his previous permission and consequently the French position at

Hyderabad Court was greatly shaken. To complete his downfall Shah Nawaz Khan advised Salabat Jung to demand the Mughal tribute from Mysore which was then actively supporting the French Cause.

But Bussy instead of opposing this proposal as expected, took the command of the invading army and was soon in sight of Seringapatam.

A great Maratha force under the Peshwa himself was at the same time marching on Mysore from the west. This expedition to the south (1754-55) was conducted on a grand scale, the Peshwa being determined to make it the means of paying his heavy debts and putting his government on a sound financial basis. Mysore could not satisfy even the demands of the Nizam and now Nana Saheb asked for the arrears of his tribute to be paid. So the Peshwa at the suggestion of Bussy had to remain content with the vast plunder he had already obtained on his way to Seringapatam. He did not, however, give up his plan of removing Bussy from the counsels of Salabat Jung and employ him if possible in his own service.

Nana Saheb now returned to Poona and conducted his campaign against Tulaji Angre as noticed before.

In the meanwhile Muzafar Khan, a mercenary commandant of the Maratha Artillery who had been trained by Bussy, deserted the Peshwa's service for that of the Nawab of Savanur. As the Nawab refused to surrender the deserter, the Peshwa assembled a great army, took Bagalkote and proceeded to attack Savanur. In this campaign the Peshwa invoked the help of the Nizam on the plea that the Nawab of Savanur would, after defying the Peshwa, repudiate the suzerainty of the Nizam. Shah Nawaz Khan who was in league with the Peshwa supported his Agent and Salabat Jung and Bussy having been brought to accept an alliance, a combined Mughal and Maratha army marched into the country of Savanur. In the van of the Maratha Army were Malharrao Holkar, Vithal Shivdeo Vinchurker and Naro Shanker. Raghuji Bhonsle was absent for he died earlier in the year 1755. He had tried to put an end to internal quarrels by dividing his State among his four sons but the brothers fought among themselves and the Peshwa turned their disputes to his own advantage.[6] He recognised

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[6] Kincaid and Parasnis, p. 323.

Janoji as his father's heir and conferred on him Raghuji's title of Sena Sahib after receiving a nazar of seven lakhs. In the present campaign Janoji was present with his feudatory contingent of ten thousand horse.

A severe defeat was inflicted on the Nawab and he fled to the shelter of the fortress of Savanur. During the siege De Bussy, it is said, fired 1,25,000 shells[7] from his efficient artillery into Savanur and the Nawab sued for peace. He was admitted to terms on giving up a part of his territory and making due submission to Salabat Jung and the Peshwa. Muzaffer Khan was also surrendered and the treacherous mercenary was once more made an artillery officer of the Peshwa much against the advice of Sadashivrao Bhau. This was a most foolish thing to do but the Peshwa wanted someone knowing the European science to command his artillery department and what does a needy man not do? In this expedition the Marathas acquired among other places, Belgaum, Sholapur, and Hubli.

As a part of the secret scheme contemplated by Shah Nawaz Khan and the Peshwa of compelling the French to quit the Deccan, Bussy was formally dismissed from the Nizam's service. An application was made to the English for a body of troops to assist in expelling Bussy and they would have accepted this offer which accorded so entirely with their views, but events previous to Plassey prevented them from taking any advantage of the favourable situation.

In spite of Bussy's critical position in the midst of his enemies that intrepid Frenchman first declined the Peshwa's offer of service and marching directly on Hyderabad established himself there. Bussy's boldness and diplomatic skill and reinforcements that soon reached him not only saved him but also made his reinstatement possible. He was publicly restored to his titles, lands, and dignities, and Bussy, for the time being, attained greater power than ever.

The resources of the Peshwa's diplomacy were, however, inexhaustible. Prompted by Balaji, the Agents of Shah Nawaz Khan raised a revolution in the Northern Circars. When Bussy was reducing the ceded districts to obedience and taking the English forts with a view to sweep the English from southern India Shah Nawaz Khan, in league with the Peshwa, set on foot

[7] Sardesai, *M. Riyasat.*

a formidable plot both against Bussy and Salabat Jung himself (1757). Their object was to confine Salabat Jung and declare his brother Nizam Ali, Subhedar of the Deccan. But the plot failed with the arrival of Bussy from Northern Circars by forced marches. In the tumult Shah Nawaz Khan was killed and the Marathas who had invaded the Nizam's Kingdom withdrew satisfied for the time being with the capture of Shivner. Bussy now master of the situation made Basalat Jung, Salabat's remaining brother, Diwan and hoped to govern the entire Deccan through him. While it would appear that Bussy had won in the struggle with the Peshwa, in reality the Peshwa had reached his goal. While Bussy was struggling to prop up Salabat Jung the English relieved from Bussy's pressure had fought and won Plassey and made themselves masters of Bengal. Nothing that the French could now do to retrieve their lost ground was of any avail. Lally, the new French Governor-General, recalled Bussy to concentrate his troops on an unsuccessful attack on Madras. The English conquered Northern Circars and the French were finally expelled from the Nizam's dominions. The Peshwa thus won in the diplomatic duel and he was soon to reap the fruits of his victory.

The Peshwa's designs were helped forward by the turbulence and faithlessness of Nizam Ali who now forced himself on Salabat Jung as Diwan in place of Baslat Jung. When he became supreme at Hyderabad Nizam Ali declined to carry out the treaty of Sakhar Kheda concluded some time before between him and the Peshwa. He refused to become the subordinate ally of the Marathas as demanded by Nana Saheb and allied himself with the English. All through 1759 the Marathas made extensive preparations for war. In November 1759 the Marathas took possession of Ahmednagar and though for a time the Maratha operations were delayed by reason of Muzafar Khan's attempt on the life of Sadashivrao the war began in earnest from December 1759. The Marathas outnumbered the Mughals and were superior in arms and equipment of every kind. Still Nizam Ali did not think of either carrying out the treaty of Sakhar Kheda acquiescing in the loss of Ahmednagar. It was not until the Mughals were attacked near Udgir and driven into the fortress of Ousha that they sued for peace. The infantry and guns under Ibrahim Khan Gardee who had become an expert in the French method of serving their canon under Bussy and who had now accepted service under Sadhashivrao, played havoc on the crowded bodies of Mughal cavalries. Their grain and forage were also effectually cut off. Nizam Ali was therefore forced to send his seal of State as minister to Sadashivrao and throw himself on the latter's mercy and generosity to make the terms. A treaty was concluded by which the forts of Ashirgad, Doulatabad, Bijapur, Ahmednagar, and Burhanpur were given up to the Marathas and territory worth annually sixty-two lakhs was yielded. Nimbalkar was no longer to remain in the service of the Nizam.

The power of the Nizam was almost as broken as the Imperial power in the North, and it appeared certain that the entire viceroyalty of the Deccan must soon succumb to the Maratha attacks. While Nana Saheb Peshwa was pushing the Maratha frontiers forward in the Deccan with vigour he was pressing Maratha interests with the same energy in the extreme South. In 1757 a vast Maratha army led by the Peshwa and Sadashivrao marched through southern India collecting tributes. All the polygars paid it readily save the Nawab of Kadapa. Mysore was made to pay five lakhs in cash and to mortgage fourteen districts for twenty-seven lakhs. The Peshwa appointed revenue collectors and occupied them with six thousand men. Then leaving Balwantrao Mehendale behind with orders to recover Sira, Bangalore, Ouscolta, Kolar and Balapur, the former conquests of the Great King, he went to Poona. Balwantrao won a great victory near Kadapa and annexed half the territory of the recalcitrant Nawab. In 1758 after levying tribute from the Nawab of Arcot he returned to Poona. When the Marathas returned home Nandraj on the advice of Hyder Ali drove the Maratha outposts from the fourteen districts and thus broke the former treaty. Hence in 1759 the Peshwa sent a Maratha army under Gopalrao Patwardhan to reduce Mysore. At first all went well with this expedition, the Marathas conquering the fourteen districts but a new adventurer now entered the list and by energy and courage so harassed Patwardhan that the Maratha General agreed to give up the fourteen districts and to accept the sum of thirty-two lakhs instead. This remarkable man was Hyder Ali. Gopalrao for his failure was reprimanded by the

Peshwa who wrote to the troubled general " Hyder has destroyed your prestige." [8]

The Empire at its Zenith—Panipat

The Delhi Empire was in its dotage and with the power of the Marathas increasing fast on all sides, it was a question of time when they would become masters of Delhi. When the old Nizam-ul-Mulk refused to accept vazirship of the Empire, the Emperor Ahmed Shah conferred it on Safdar Jang, Subhedar of Oudh. The first object of the new Vazir was the destruction of the Rohilas who had occupied Rohil-Khand and were encroaching on the territories of the Vazir in the province of Oudh. To check their growing power which Safdar Jang himself was unable to accomplish single-handed, he called in the help of Malharrao Holkar and Jayappa Shinde. The Marathas defeated the Rohilas and overran their country. In 1752 Ahmed Shah Abdali again invaded the Punjab and Safdar Jung and the Marathas agreed to evacuate Rohil-Khand on condition that the Rohilas paid five lakhs per year to the Emperor and signed bonds for fifty lakhs payable to the Vazir. These bonds the Vazir in turn handed over to Holkar and Shinde in part payment of the subsidies due to them. These unredeemed bonds formed the basis of the future Maratha claim on Rohil-Khand.[9] Ahmed Shah Abdali demanded the formal cession of the province of the Punjab and when the weak Emperor ceded it Abdali appointed Mir Mannu, Governor of his new possession. This cession caused a revolution at Delhi (1754) and Ghaziuddin (son of the Nizam) who bore a conspicuous part in the troubles and crimes of the period, obtained with the Maratha help, from the Emperor the office of Vazir for himself. He next blinded and deposed the Emperor and raised to the throne a son of Jahander Shah with the title of Alamgir II. Shortly afterwards Safdar Jung died and his son Shuja-ud-Doula succeeded to the viceroyalty of Oudh and Allahabad. Violence, rapine, and anarchy continued to increase in Hindustan and the ever-increasing dissensions of the court paved the way for the Maratha interference. The national cause was succeeding everywhere but affairs in northern India and the rapid increase in the Maratha influence at the Imperial Court led to the disaster of Panipat.

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[8] Khare: *Itihasik Lekh Sangraha*, Vol. I, Letter 24.
[9] Hamilton—*History of the Rohila Afghans*, p. 112.

The revolution at Delhi made matters at the fallen court of Delhi still worse and the confusion in northern India increased. The new Vazir's attempt to recover the ceded provinces of Lahore and Multan brought the enraged Abdali into Delhi where he repeated the atrocities of Nadir Shah. At Mathura the Afghan cruelty reached its zenith. They slaughtered the men, outraged the women, and sacked the holy city and its beautiful temples. Ahmed Shah Abdali was forced to abandon his conquest by the outbreak of plague in his camp but before he retired he appointed Nazir-ud-Doula, the Rohila chief, as Vazir and left his son Timur Shah as the Viceroy of the Punjab. Raghoba in the meanwhile had levied tribute on Ajmere, the Rajput States and the Jats and was now in Malwa. Ghaziuddin wanting to reduce the Emperor supported by Najib-ud-Doulah entered into an alliance with Raghoba and by his assistance soon recovered Delhi and the person of the Emperor who perforce took Ghaziuddin as his Vazir.

For some time Raghoba remained encamped in the neighbourhood of Delhi when he was summoned to Lahore by Adina Beg, the dissatisfied deputy of Mir Mannu. A splendid opportunity of carrying the Maratha arms into the farthest limits of northern India presented itself. Raghoba entered Lahore (1758) and Timur's army of occupation, thinking decretion to be the better part of valour, made a retreat leaving his entire camp into the hands of the victors. The Marathas reached Attock and the Deccan horse quenched their thirst from the waters of the Indus. Raghoba appointed Adina Beg, Sir Subedar of Multan and Lahore, and left a small Maratha force to support him. Raghoba then returned to Poona. His improvidence in this as well as in most campaigns of his life was very conspicuous. His conquest though on a grand scale brought no revenue to the exchequer. On the contrary he contracted a debt of eighty lakhs of rupees and this circumstance led to the quarrel with Sadashivrao Bhau on his return to Poona.

Bhau who had a natural aversion of incompetence in any form was justly incensed at the bungling of Raghoba and it was therefore agreed that in the next campaign Sadashivrao should take the command of the army.

Raghoba's conquest of the Punjab and Timur's expulsion from that province filled Ahmed Shah with the utmost indignation and he advanced in great force to recover the provinces of Lahore and Multan. This coming back of the Muslim fanatic led to the organisation of the Muslim confederacy consisting of all those who clearly saw by this time that the Marathas would slowly if inevitably absorb all their petty kingdoms and the subsequent war assumed the character of a war between Hindus and Muslims and ended in the victory of Panipat.

Panipat was the last war that the Muslims fought for keeping their heads above the water of the Maratha deluge. Be it remembered, however, that the Rajputs and the other Hindus of the North with the solitary exception of Surojmall Jat sympathised with Abdali, the destroyer of Mathura and the sworn enemy of Hinduism. This was indeed the result of the short-sighted policy followed by Nana Saheb Peshwa towards the Rajputs and the other Hindus.

The Abdali had won Panipat by his patient and skilled generalship. " Never was a defeat more complete," Elphinstone says, " and never was then a calamity that diffused so much consternation. Grief and despondency spread over the whole Maratha people, most had to mourn relations, and all felt the destruction of the army as a death blow to their national greatness. The Peshwa never recovered from the shock. He slowly retreated from his frontier towards Poona and died in a temple which he had himself erected near the city. The wreck of the army retired beyond the Narmada evacuating almost all their acquisitions in Hindustan. Dissensions soon broke out after the death of Balaji and the Government of the Peshwa never regained its vigour. Most of the Maratha conquests were recovered at a subsequent period; but it was by independent peace with the aid of the European officers and disciplined sepoys. The confederacy of the Mahomedan princes was dissolved on the cessation of their common danger. Ahmed Shah returned home without profiting by his victory and never afterwards took any share in the affairs of India."[10] This excellent summary of the results of Panipat, as given by Elphinstone, requires correction in one particular. The government of Peshwa, torn as it was by civil war at Poona, recovered all its vigour if only for a brief while, under Madhavrao Peshwa and the chiefs who later on recovered the Maratha possessions in India were not as independent as he supposed. Panipat though a crushing defeat for the Marathas was yet a pyrrhic victory for the Muslim victors. The Maratha valour exacted a fearful toll in the number of soldiers killed on the battle field and too completely incapacitated their enemies to allow them to reap the fruits of their hard-won success. Even Abdali, who was shrewd enough not to misunderstand the temper or worth of his late antagonists, quickly withdrew to his country from the avenging Maratha army and never again troubled himself either about the fate of the Mughal Empire or the fortunes of his quondam friends. They were left to be crushed by the Maratha Sardars who never forgot the disaster of Panipat nor forgave the barbarous cruelty perpetrated on their defeated countrymen. The Indian potentates who had made common cause with their foreign co-relegionists with a view to secure permanent immunity from Maratha attacks, were themselves seriously crippled. Alas! while the dreaded Marathas marvellously recouped their strength and vigour in a short time, they did not possess the vitality of their enemies and had consequently to throw themselves on the mercy of their late vanquished antagonists. The defeat of Panipat was a moral victory for the Marathas. They had succeeded in spite of their defeat, in eliminating subsequent foreign interference from the Indian affairs. It was a triumph of the principle, "India for the Indians". The glory of the Marathas was that they had confidently faced in a pitched battle for the first time in their history the invader from the North who had always been a terror to the people of India, Hindus as well as Muslims. The rise of the Sikhs in the Punjab, securely barred and bolted the northern door and thus made the security of the N.-W. Frontier of India doubly sure. In the past such a decisive victory had usually been followed by the establishment of a foreign dynasty at Delhi. "Yet although the Marathas were clean swept out of northern India for the time and although Ahmed Shah represented precisely the type of those Asiatic conquerors who had hitherto founded Imperial houses at Delhi or Agra, it is a remarkable fact that the results of Panipat were quite disproportionate to the magnitude of the exploit."[11] Ahmed Shah's precipitate withdrawal from the scene of his victory which must be attributed to the dread of his soldiers of encountering the Marathas a second time, practically closed the line of conquering invaders from central Asia.

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[10] *History of India*, p. 734.

The only party to profit by the tragedy of Panipat was the common enemy of the children of the soil—the English. They stole a sly march over both and strengthened their position in Bengal and in Madras. The depression of the Maratha Confederacy warded off the intended Maratha attack upon Bengal in which Shuja would have taken part and as Keen[12] remarks, the still struggling power of the British company might have been overwhelmed. Panipat gave them enough breathing time to win Plassey and to triumph over the French in Madras. Yet it must not be supposed that Panipat alone was the cause of their rise in this land. We must give due weight to other important factors, e.g. the civil wars of the Maratha Confederacy.

Nana Saheb Peshwa and the Empire

The Maratha Empire reached its zenith under Nana Saheb Peshwa both as regards its external frontiers and its internal management and material prosperity. We have so far noticed its external growth. Let us now review its internal development. There can be no doubt that the civil administration and the condition of the people considerably improved in his regime. He encouraged agriculture by improving the revenue system and the administration of justice. The credit of much of the popularity of his civil administration must be given to Sadashivrao Bhau. Before Shahu's death little amendment could be effected in the civil administration. But the beginning of a system of order which afforded some protection to the people from the violence of those times was made in 1750 by Ramchandra Baba Shenwee and after his death, Sadashivrao, who along with others had been trained by Ramchandra Baba, improved upon his suggestions. Nana Saheb knew well the advantage of bringing the revenue collectors under control. He did not possess

[11] Lyall: *British Dominion in India*, p. 154.

[12] *History of India*, p. 175.

sufficient energy for the undertaking himself but he unreservedly supported the measures of his cousin. Sadashivrao compelled the revenue officers to produce their accounts and made large recoveries due to the government. In this work he incurred great odium and had to overcome much opposition, even by resorting to force in some cases. Similarly Balshastri Gadgil improved the judicial system. The police too came to be much invigorated at Poona.

The progressive state of the improvement in the condition of the masses was mainly due to the abolition, since the time of Balaji Vishwanath, of the pernicious system of farming the revenues.

If Nana Saheb had no genius for civil government he had a strong natural inclination to all sorts of political intrigues. He was by nature an inactive man and as he could rely on capable agents he became somewhat indolent by habit. He never went personally to northern India and to the last he had no proper appreciation of the Delhi politics. He neglected the North and paid more attention to the South with the result that he never understood the extent of the Afghan menace. The affairs of southern India must have attracted his attention for two reasons: (1) money; (2) their comparative freedom from the interests of other powerful war-lords. But he did not realise what the Maratha Nation was losing by his not having paid equal personal attention to the intricate politics of the North. His selfish interests may have impelled him to annihilate Tulaji Angre but he forgot that he was thereby effectively helping the enemies of his nation and that this selfish diplomacy would one day recoil on his head. He must be blamed on another account; he allowed, nay even encouraged, his officers and soldiers to take with them their wives and families while on active service.[13] He was indeed a great politician but without either the real greatness of Baji Rao I or the ability of Madhavrao. Grant Duff justly remarks of him, " Ballaji Baji Rao was one of those princes whose good fortune, originating in causes anterior to their time, obtain, in consequence of national prosperity, a higher degree of celebrity especially among their own countrymen than they fully merit. Ballaji Rao, however, was a man of considerable political sagacity, of polished manners and of great address. His measures are marked by an excessive cunning which Brahmins in general mistake for wisdom; he practised all the arts of dissimulation and was a perfect adept in every species of intrigue. The private life of Ballaji Rao was stained with gross sensuality; but though indolent and voluptuous he was generous and charitable, kind to his relatives and dependants, an enemy to external violence and to that sort of oppression which such violence implies. On the whole he may be regarded as rather a favourable specimen of a Brahmin in Power."[14] The rise of most of the principal Brahmin families dates from this time and the beginning of family dissensions which had so great an influence on the course of the future Maratha history was also made in his reign. A civil war even in his own days was prevented by the sacrifice of Mahadaji Pant Purandare who resigned his office of the Peshwa's Diwan to make room for Sadashivrao Bhau. The latter had already accepted the Peshwaship at Kolhapur on the advice of Ramchandra Baba when Nana Saheb refused to allow him at first due share of the State authority. But the good sense of both prevailed in the end and Sadashivrao Bhau was given charge of the management of civil administration in the capacity of the Peshwa's Diwan—a post for which by his natural ability he was quite fit.

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[13] Kincaid & Parasnis, p. 347.

The Bhau was violent and avaricious but active and vigorous and though uncompromising in public affairs he was not without a large share of good nature and good sense.

It is interesting to note in this place that feminine jealousy and influence which were absent in Baji Rao's time and which were to give rise to fatal domestic feuds in subsequent reigns had begun to operate in this period. Sadashivrao had been viewed by Gopikabai, the Peshwa's wife, with feelings of jealousy and hatred which were in course of time on an increase owing to the Bhau's activity and diligence in matters of State. She probably thought that her husband might be eclipsed by his more capable Diwan and that he might usurp all power to the detriment of her son's interests. To prevent the second contingency Vishwasrao was associated from early days of his life with his uncle to undergo training which would qualify him for the high position of Peshwa.

[14] *History of the Marathas*, pp. 157-158.

These family squabbles came to a head on Raghoba's return from northern India. The Diwan had every reason to be dissatisfied with Raghoba's spineless conduct in the campaign inasmuch as he had brought nothing but a heavy debt against the public treasury. When therefore Sadhashivrao blamed him he indignantly asked his cousin to lead the next expedition himself and it was thus that the Bhau was appointed commander-in-chief of the army that was defeated at Panipat. This quarrel could not be made up just as the other one between the Peshwa and Sadashivrao was amicably settled. Bhau's death obviated further frictions in the family but it was to recur with redoubled vigour in the next reign of Madhavrao. Raghoba was always in the hands of his ambitious and intriguing wife, Anandibai, and these family differences soon became acute.

Accession of Madhavrao and the Civil War

The disaster of Panipat and the death of Nana Saheb Peshwa gave an opportunity to the enemies of Maharashtra to aggrandise themselves and to utilise the weakness of the Maratha Empire for their own ends. But all their hopes were frustrated by the young Peshwa, Madhavrao, who conducted the affairs of the Empire with conspicuous military and civil ability. A series of plots and disturbances followed. There was no danger from the conquerors of Panipat for they had been equally put out of action. The gravest danger came from the Nizam, and Hyder Ali who had by this time usurped the Government of Mysore from the weak hands of his Hindu master. In September 1761 Madhavrao, the second son of the late Peshwa then in his seventeenth year, received his investiture as Peshwa from the nominal king at Satara. Young as the new Peshwa was, he possessed even in his early youth a ripe judgment, a high spirit, real statesmanship and talents of a great soldier. It is to be sincerely regretted that the highly promising career of this greatest of the Peshwas was cut short by the hand of cruel death. During his reign of eleven years, however, he did enough to foil all the ambitions of the enemies of the Maratha Empire.

When after reaching Delhi (January 1761) Ahmed Shah Abdalli proposed to his Afghans that he should crown himself Emperor they broke into a mutiny and demanded their arrears of pay. This event forced him to return to Afghanistan. Before he left he acknowledged the fugitive prince Ali Gohar as Emperor with the title of Shah Alam, appointed Shuja-ud-Doulah, Vazir of the Empire, and entrusted Delhi and the family to the care of Najib-ud-Doulah. No sooner did the confederates win Panipat than they began to quarrel amongst themselves to the immense relief of the Marathas.

Nizam Ali who had now usurped the entire powers of the government prepared to take the fullest advantage of the situation. The time was most favourable for the restoration of the Mughal authority in the Deccan and to recover the territory lost at Udgir. Violent party feelings which arise in any country after military reverses were heightened by caste prejudices and the intrigues of Raghoba. Nizam Ali therefore marched with all speed towards Poona and pressed on as far as Urali but after continuous fighting he was glad to confirm the treaty of Udgir and return to his own dominions. That he did not fare worse as the Marathas universally desired must be ascribed only to the treasonable desire of Raghoba and Sakharam Bapu to treat the Nizam leniently to serve their own personal ends. Raghoba's intention was to render the Nizam a good turn now, so that he could count on his support in his quarrels with his nephew afterwards. In 1762 after the conclusion of the treaty Madhavrao with Trimbakrao Mama was sent to collect the dues from the southern territory. Warned of the aspiring nature of his uncle during the campaign the young Peshwa resolved to assert his legitimate rights and on his return to Poona demanded to be admitted to a fuller share in the government. Raghoba, fond of power, took offence at this presumption and he and his friend, the double-dealer Sakharam Bapu, resigned their respective positions thinking that their services were quite indispensable to the young man. But they misjudged the spirit of Madhavrao. He in his usual prompt and determined manner undertook the responsibility of the whole government on his own shoulders, appointed Trimbakrao Mama to act as Diwan in place of Sakharam Bapu and chose Hari Pant Phadke and Ballaji Janardhan Bhanu (afterwards Nana Fadnavis) as his personal Karkoons.

Raghoba now found that his absence from the counsels of the government produced none of those calamities which he had expected. Sakharam Bapu's jealousy too was excited by the acceptance of the office of the minister by Trimbakrao Mama. This state of feeling was aggravated by the strongest animosity between Anandibai, Raghoba's wife, and Gopikabai, the mother of the Peshwa. The ambitious Anandibai did not like her husband's retirement into private life from his Regency and Raghoba incited by his wife and yielding to his anger made war on his nephew with the help of the friendly Nizam and Janoji Bhonsle and some other discontented Maratha Sirdars. Madhavrao's inferior army was defeated in the battle of Ghodnadi and everything indicated the probability of a great revolution in the Poona Government. The Peshwa, however, rather than continue the civil war, profitable to his country's enemies and one which would end in the complete division in the State, made up his mind, with remarkable foresight and decision to make his submission to Raghoba. He directed his friends to seek their own safety and presented himself before his uncle. The latter of course placed him in confinement but was obliged to show him that respect which he himself could never command even in his prosperous days. Raghoba then took over the administration in Madhavrao's name and being uncontrolled at once proceeded to make partisan appointments to government posts. These vindictive and impolitic changes created general discontent, especially the extreme measure against Gopalrao Patwardhan and the disaffection they caused made many of the Maratha officers listen to overtures of Vithal Sunder, the minister of Nizam Ali. This astute minister saw in the internal confusion of the Maratha Empire an opportunity of checking the Marathas and persuaded his master that the most advisable policy under the circumstances was to overthrow the government of the Chitpavan Brahmins and declare Janoji Bhonsle, Regent. He invited all the discontented Maratha leaders to join Nizam Ali and Gopalrao Patwardhan, Bhawanrao Pratinidhi, the Nimbalkars, Moroba Phadnavis, Sadashiv Ramchandra, Janoji Bhonsle and a host of them accordingly joined the Mughals. With this accession of unexpected strength Nizam Ali commenced hostilities and marched unopposed to Poona, plundered the panic-striken people and partially burnt the town. In the meanwhile Raghoba, following Sakharam Bapu's advice, had opened secret negotiations with the Maratha chiefs in the Nizam's army. The first to be won over was Janoji Bhonsle who agreed to withdraw his support upon a promise of receiving an estate out of the territory ceded to the Marathas at Udgir. Janoji in turn corrupted other leaders with the Nizam and they promised to desert on the first favourable opportunity. Accordingly they withdrew from the Nizam's camp on the eve of the battle of Rakshasabhuvan. The Mughal army was attacked and routed with great slaughter. Throughout the battle of Rakshasabhuvan Madhavrao, though young and inexperienced, distinguished himself by personal energy and determination in supporting the different points of attack. Rakshasabhuvan was the beginning of his greatness and it soon convinced the Maratha leaders of his ability. The claims of Madhavrao after his gallantry in the late war, could no longer be ignored and Raghoba, though jealous at heart of the Peshwa's achievement, had to accord him a large share in the government.

His first step was to condemn with manly candour the unprincipled conduct and duplicity of Janoji Bhonsle and to correct Raghoba's errors by which so many of the leaders had been estranged from the Peshwa's cause. He restored the office of the Pratinidhi to Bhavanrao and Miraj to Gopalrao. The post of Fadnavis was bestowed on Nana Fadnavis, though not on his cousin Moroba. The genius of Madhavrao thus gave to the administration that vigorous tone which placed him afterwards in the affections of his subjects, second only to the Great King himself.

While the Marathas were busy with their affairs in the North previous to Panipat and during the subsequent period during which they were checking the aggressions of Nizam, Hyder Ali by a judicious combination of treachery and military skill made himself the virtual master of Mysore. Taking advantage of the Maratha defeat at Panipat he began a series of campaigns of aggrandisement on the Maratha territory and extended his frontier as far as the Krishna river but his continued insults to the Maratha flag did not go unpunished. Madhavrao assembled a large army at Poona which was to have been directed at once against the bold adventurer. He was not, however, free to take the command in person until by the support of Sakharam Bapu he eliminated the opposition of Raghoba who insisted upon his own claim to lead the army. The latter in anger left Poona and retired to Nasik when his pretensions were overruled. Hyder Ali's army though trained by the French was defeated several times with severe loss and he was soon convinced that, a clever general and a tough fighter as he was, it was impossible for him to hold out long against the Marathas. Perceiving that the war would end successfully Raghoba had been requested to assume command purely from conciliatory motives and accordingly when he did it Hyder Ali made overtures of peace to him. Raghoba, however, on whom the recent generosity of Madhavrao was entirely lost, still entertained in his heart treacherous designs. He was anxious to secure for himself a friend in the South in his future need. The time was such that the Marathas could have easily destroyed their formidable foe but Raghoba advisedly granted most favourable terms. All that Hyder Ali was asked to do was to restore all districts and places wrested from Morarirao Ghorpade, to relinquish all claims on the Nawab of Savanur and to pay thirty-two lakhs of rupees to the Peshwa. Madhavrao did not approve of these terms but having once granted full authority to his uncle he honourably adhered to the agreement. Madhavrao's conduct in inviting Raghoba to take the command of the army and in sanctioning for a mere point of honour the treaty which was manifestly against the interests of the State was highly creditable to the young Peshwa. But Raghoba's inordinate love of power cost the Marathas a golden opportunity of effectively reducing Hyder Ali's power.

Though Madhavrao acquiesced in the grant of lands previously alluded to to Janoji Bhonsle he had not forgiven the treacherous manner in which the same had been acquired. Nor was Janoji's subsequent conduct such as to merit forgiveness. He opened treasonable correspondence with Raghoba's wife, Anandibai, hoping to instigate her husband through her to a fresh rebellion. Coming to know of Janoji's seditious correspondence through the agency of his efficient secret service Madhavrao entered into a secret compact with Nizam Ali who was ready to listen to the Peshwa's proposal of an offensive alliance against Janoji. The combined army entered Berar (1765-66) and forced Janoji to surrender three-quarters of the grant given to him for his late desertion. Out of the surrendered twenty-four lakhs Nizam Ali got fifteen lakhs in return for a secret understanding to help Madhavrao against Hyder Ali. Thus the Peshwa conciliated the Nizam at the expense of his faithless vassal and at the same time prevented him from aiding Raghoba.

The Nizam, however, proved a broken reed. Far from giving Madhavrao the stipulated help he entered into a secret understanding with the English having for its object the downfall of Hyder Ali and the defeat of the Marathas. Madhavrao, therefore, perceiving what was meant by this combination took field against Hyder Ali without waiting for his slippery ally. The Peshwa's force overran the countryside and the Nizam and the English assumed a threatening attitude. Hyder Ali had now to buy off the Peshwa and on the payment of thirty-five lakhs the occupied districts were evacuated. The Peshwa thus made his peace with Hyder Ali separately and when the English and Nizam Ali demanded a share in the spoils he unceremoniously rejected the demands. It was in this way that he disconcerted the plans of Nizam Ali and the English who were now left to settle with Hyder Ali as best they could. In 1768 a new treaty was concluded between Nizam Ali and the English. The treaty declared Hyder Ali a usurper and the contracting parties arrogated to themselves the right and power to dispose of Hyder Ali's territories. The Peshwa, partly from policy and chiefly owing to the internal situation of the Maratha Empire did not interfere with the warfare between the English and Hyder Ali.

While Madhavrao was adding to his reputation as a skilful commander in the Karnatic, Raghoba as usual was unsuccessful in the North where he had led an expedition the previous year. The Rana of Goharo, who had risen to considerable power after Panipat from the position of an obscure landholder, successfully defended himself against Raghoba and Raghoba failed to achieve anything. He reached Deccan after his improvident and useless campaign of eighteen months in June 1767, shortly after his victorious nephew and was soon at his favourite game again. Angry at his own failure and jealous of Madhavrao's success he turned a willing ear to the suggestions of Anandibai of getting the sovereignty of the Empire divided. Madhavrao was always willing to give a Jahagir worth twelve lakhs and two forts but nothing short of half the Empire would satisfy

Raghoba's ambition. To the latter proposal Madhavrao bluntly replied that he must either take the share of the administration as proposed or have no interference whatever in the government. At this decided tone of the Peshwa he openly talked of becoming a religious ascetic and of retiring to Benares somewhat after the fashion of Aurangzeb but at the same time secretly carried on correspondence with Janoji Bhonsle. Long before the latter could give Raghoba any substantial aid Madhavrao defeated his uncle's levies near Nasik and sent Raghoba a State prisoner to Poona. The Peshwa next brought Janoji to complete obedience. Janoji was reduced by the agreement of Kankapur to the position of a subordinate ally. Having humbled the malcontents at home, he was free to look into Maratha affairs abroad.

In the meantime Hyder Ali forced the English by a series of skilfully fought actions to make a defensive alliance with himself and directed against the Marathas. Secure as he thought in the alliance with the English he returned to the offensive against the Peshwa. But the English help never came and poor Hyder was repeatedly routed and was at last forced to surrender all Shivaji's former conquests including Kolar, Bangalore, Ouscotta, in addition to two other towns and Sira and agree to pay also an indemnity of thirty-six lakhs and an annual tribute of fourteen lakhs. The Mysore Kingdom was now reduced to a smaller area than what it was at Hyder's advent to power.

Panipat Avenged

At this point we must return to the affairs at Delhi. During all these days neither domestic troubles nor foreign distractions had made the Marathas forget the day of their humiliation at Panipat or their duty to avenge the innocent blood of their countrymen. The day of reckoning came when in 1769 the Peshwa was free from the menace of Raghoba's ambitions and condign punishment was inflicted on all those who had wavered in their cause or dared to go against them.

For some time after Nana Saheb's death Shinde and Holkar were the two chiefs who had looked after the Maratha interests in the North. Madhavrao now sent a punitive expedition under the supreme command of Visaji Krishna Biniwale who was joined by large contingents under Tukoji Holkar and Madhavrao Shinde. The avenging warriors crossed the Narmada and entered Rajputana from whom they exacted the arrears of tribute to the extent of ten lakhs. They next marched against the Jat country. The Jats showed fight but were defeated near Bharatpur and it was not until their country was overrun that they purchased freedom from further punishment by paying sixty-five lakhs, the arrears of their tribute. The fury of the Marathas seemed from the beginning to have been specially reserved for the arrogant Afghans, Pathans, and Rohillas. The author of Panipat, Najib-ud-Doulah now began to tremble for his life. Since 1764 when the English won the battle of Buxar, the fugitive emperor Shah Allam had accepted English protection and lived at Allahabad. Najib-ud-Doulah conducted the government at Delhi in the absence of the Emperor and the approach of the victorious Maratha army was enough to reduce him to the extremity of suing for terms. Madhavrao Shinde wanted to exterminate the Rohillas; he was however saved by death from further ignominies. Halting for a time at Delhi the Marathas entered the Doab, the land between the Jamna and the Ganges and drove the panic-stricken Rohillas across the Ganges. The fortress of Etawah was occupied and they took possession of the entire Doab. They then conceived the brilliant idea of persuading the Emperor Shah Allam to leave the protection of the English for that of the Marathas who promised to seat him on the throne and protect him from foreign aggression by Maratha swords and Maratha valour. The Emperor accepted their offer and joined Mahadaji's camp. In 1771 the Emperor was taken to his capital escorted by Visaji Krishna and a great Maratha army. The Marathas were now free to wreck their vengeance on the Rohillas. A large army under Mahadaji Shinde invaded the fief of Zabitakhan, son of Najib-ud-Doulah and plundered the whole of Rohilkhand and captured the ladies of Zabitakhan's household whom they held to ransom for one and a half lakhs. The Rohillas lost all courage and the strongest entrenchments and even forts were abandoned before a horseman came in sight. Zabitakhan and those of the leaders who survived fled to the forests. Afterwards the Marathas resold Rohilkhand to Zabitakhan and made the Emperor grant them the districts of Kara and Allahabad in return for their protection. The Emperor's dominions were now reduced to the single town of Delhi and he regretted the step he had taken. In a fit of despair he directed Najibkhan to drive the Maratha army from Delhi. Biniwale who had not expected this step on the part of Shah Allam, withdrew his troops and sent for Poona for orders. But in the meanwhile Madhavrao had died in November 1772 and Visaji did not receive an immediate reply.

Madhavrao and the Empire

The military talents of Peshwa Madhavrao were very considerable but his claim on the memory of posterity rests on his character as a sovereign. Called upon to steer the vessel of the Maratha Empire through the stormy times succeeding Panipat, he had signally triumphed over domestic and foreign enemies. In his firm support of the weak against oppression, of the poor against the rich and in his justice and equity to all he is the second best prince Maharashtra has produced. He made no innovations in the form of the system which had been established since the days of the Great King but he tried to amend the defects which had since crept in and if he could not stamp out corruption he at least made laudable efforts to restrain it.

While yet a child he assumed the onerous burden of the Empire, like the younger Pitt and devoted his whole time in tireless labour to better the lot of his subjects. Seizing every interval of leisure to improve the civil government he invigorated every department by his personal supervision, his industry and his example. In an age of universal corruption he was the only man who was not selfish or corrupt. He had a nice sense of public duty and that is why he could enforce discipline on the refractory vassals with greater success than his predecessors. His sincere desire to protect his subjects by an even administration of justice reflects the highest credit on his regime. His efforts were admirably seconded by his chief justice Ram Shastri Prabhune from whom he was not slow to learn his duties as king. An upright and a pure judge and admirably outspoken in the expression of his opinion Ram Shastri one day administered a strong rebuke to Madhavrao when the latter began the practice of following the mystical observances enjoined by the Shastras at the expense of attention to public business. " It is only so," said the scandalised Ram Shastri, "provided you entirely renounce worldly advantages. As Brahmins have departed from the ordinances of their faith and assumed the office of Rajas it becomes them to exercise power for the benefit of their subjects as the best and only apology for having usurped it. It behoves you to attend to the welfare of your people and your government; or if you cannot reconcile yourself to those duties quit the Mussad, accompany me and devote your life strictly to those observances which I fully admit our faith enjoins."[15] The sensible Peshwa learnt the lesson and abandoned the studies which had misled him and which had invited the just rebuke of Ram Shastri. Ram Shastri was the solitary example of an officer who served the State quite disinterestedly without caring for riches and for the frowns or favours of the highest authority. He was never found remiss in his duty, whatever the price and hence naturally his conduct and unwearied zeal had a great effect in improving the level of public life of those days.

Madhavrao maintained a faultless secret service and no matter how remote or how great the officer guilty of acts of tyranny he rarely escaped punishment at his hands. He kept the entire military machine under his direct control and organised well-equipped armies even for distant services. Quick to anger, he was no less so to forgive. The decision of his character and the strictness of his public measures were remarkable in that age of vacillation and fickle mindedness of which Raghoba was the best example. No wonder therefore that G. Duff remarks, "The death of Madhav Rao occasioned no immediate commotion; like his own disease it was at first scarcely perceptible but the root which invigorated the already scattered and wide-extending tree, was cut off from the stem and the plains of Panipat were not more fatal to the Maratha Empire than the early end of this excellent prince."[16]

Indeed Madhavrao regained for the Maratha nation what was lost at Panipat. After the crushing defeat of the Rohillas and the Pathans the last vestige of Muslim resistance to the Hindu sovereignty of the whole of India was swept away. Hereafter the Maratha suzerainty was disputed by a nation different in every respect from the Muslim, the English. That nation had, by this time, accepted the policy of territorial acquisition and had already made a promising beginning at Plassey (1757). When Lord Clive returned to Bengal in 1765 he was convinced that to advance was necessary alike for their preservation and for their future plans. Of the three great powers, the Marathas, Nizam Ali, and Hyder, they regarded the first as the most formidable. They cautiously directed their measures towards seeing the Marathas checked but not by themselves as principals. Their immediate object was to direct other powers against the Marathas who were yet powerful and not sufficiently disunited. Mr. Mostyn was also sent to Poona to foment domestic dissensions as a preliminary to taking any direct action against them in future. The English were anxious at this time to attain two objects: (1) possession of Salsette and other islands in the neighbourhood of Bombay and (2) the occupation of the five districts of the Northern Sircars. They wanted thus to strengthen their different bases of operations and then to wait for their opportunity. By their treaty with Nizam Ali they succeeded in their second aim. But the other object of this alliance, viz. the subjugation of Hyder and an indirect check to the spread of the Maratha power, was frustrated by Madhavrao as we have seen before. With respect to the first object the Marathas would not have willingly relinquished the islands, the fruits of Chimnaji Appa's success against an European nation.

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[15] G. Duff: *History of the Marathas*, pp. 209-10.
[16] *History of the Marathas*, p. 228.

None the less the English were not at this period sufficiently strong to try conclusions with the Marathas but having decided to enter the lists they were alert to turn every circumstance to their advantage. They clearly saw that their final struggle for a dominion in India will have to be with the Marathas and from that point of view they played their diplomatic game with perfect skill. On the contrary the Poona statesmen put too much reliance in their own military strength, never had any just appreciation of the danger from the English and never saw the necessity of sinking their domestic differences. The civil war at Poona weakened the central authority which was strong upto the death of Madhavrao. The vassal States of the Confederacy began to assume more and more the character of independent States. During the last fifty years or so of the existence of the Maratha Empire, the character of the State affairs began to be less national and more personal and the working of Stasis was at its worst. How the fatal ambitions of Raghoba and his wife, Anandibai, and the inter-State feuds of the Empire facilitated the expansion of the English power in India we shall see in the sequel.

Murder of Narayanrao Peshwa

From the death of Madhavrao onwards, the Maratha Empire began to suffer from the disease of stasis and the decline of the Marathas ensured the rise of the British power just as the stasis of the ancient Greeks made their conquest by Macedon almost inevitable. Narayanrao was duly invested as Peshwa by the titular Raja but he lacked the eminent qualities of his brother Madhavrao. The real danger, however, came as Madhavrao foresaw from the restless ambition of Raghoba and the infamous Anandibai. They both chafed at their imprisonment and in 1772 Raghoba corrupted his guards and escaped from his captivity. When he was retaken, Raghoba and Anandibai were of course imprisoned with greater severity but the proverbial Hindu weakness asserted itself. Instead of the only sure method of putting an end to all the troubles of the State by promptly executing the traitor, Madhavrao from mistaken notions of humanity set Raghoba at liberty before his death. Raghoba had repeatedly acted against Madhavrao and the State in a treacherous manner; Raghoba's weakness who was guided by the desperate counsels of his evil-minded wife was well known yet Madhavrao foolishly made him promise that he would behave rightly towards his nephew Narayanrao and thus effected a reconciliation between the two. Madhavrao so far forgot his usual wisdom that uncle and nephew entered upon a discussion of their state of affairs in the course of which Madhavrao represented the necessity of concord for their mutual safety and the preservation of the government and recommended his brother to the care and protection of his wicked and worthless uncle. The whole sorry business was like recommending a lamb to the tender mercies of a tiger. For a month or so Raghoba and Narayanrao were on the most amicable terms but the former was the slave of his wife and the latter was equally submissive to his mother, Gopikabai. The jealousy of these two short-sighted women set at naught the pious hopes and good intentions of the dead Peshwa and Gopikabai urged upon her son the necessity of his confining his uncle. Accordingly Narayanrao with the consent of all except the double-dealer Sakharam Bapu made Raghoba prisoner and confined him in Shanwarwada. Anyway the hatred of these women for each other and the rivalry between the ministers would have surely created discord in the capital of the Maratha Empire sooner or later. But now an unexpected event threw the Maratha affairs in a hopeless confusion.

There was no dearth of partisans and supporters for Raghoba at any time. There were enough men and even high officers and ministers who would not scruple to espouse any cause for their personal ends. Another source of supporters for Raghoba's cause was the rivalry between different claimants to the several gadis of the feudal barons. The death of a Sirdar like the Bhonsle of Nagpur or the Gaikwar of Baroda would at once give rise to dynastic quarrels and bloody fights would take place between brothers or between rival uncles trying to secure the Regency of the minor son for themselves. The unsuccessful rivals from all these feudatory capitals would instinctively make common cause with the prince of these pretenders—Raghoba. Thus these domestic feuds at the capitals of the feudatory States beautifully blended with the superior quarrels at the central capital till at last the enemies of the Maratha State got golden opportunities to ruin the Empire. Raghoba, therefore, had many friends still and Anandibai formed a plot to secure her husband's escape to Hyder Ali. The plot was discovered and Raghoba was once again confined but this time under greater strictness. Nothing undaunted, the exasperated Anandibai now attempted to encompass the destruction of Narayanrao and aided by a number of Kayasta Prabhus, the agents of Mudhoji Bhonsle and the leaders of the turbulent and disloyal Gardis, Narayanrao was murdered. A warning of the coming disturbances had been conveyed to Hari Pant Fadke and he had been asked by Narayanrao to secure the palace but Hari Pant took no action whatever on those orders and actually left the palace to have a dinner with a friend. Hari Pant's thoughtless neglect on that day cost the Peshwa his life and had momentous consequences for the Maratha Empire. In politics,

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weakness in high quarters reacts adversely on the fortunes of States.

Raghoba became very unpopular and when the horrified and righteous Ram Shastri was asked what atonement he should make for his part in the fall of Narayanrao, he sharply replied, "The sacrifice of your own life for your future life cannot be passed in amendment; neither you nor your government can prosper; and for my own part I will neither accept of employment nor enter Poona whilst you preside in the administration." [17] Ram Shastri of course retired to a secluded village near Wai. Raghoba now received his clothes of investiture as Peshwa.

Narayanrao who had been planning to lead an expedition to the conquest of the Karnatic had ordered Visaji Krishna Biniwale in reply to his application for instructions to drive away Nazaf Khan and to come back home for the proposed expedition. Accordingly Nazaf Khan was driven from the Emperor's service and Zabita Khan was appointed the Imperial commander-in-chief nominally as the deputy of the Peshwa. But after the recall of the Maratha force from northern India this arrangement was swept aside; Najaf Khan returned to Delhi and the Marathas were driven away from Ettawah by the Nabob of Oudh. Thus the affairs in the North remained in an unsettled condition. At home also Raghoba's assumption of power did not improve matters. On the Eastern frontier Nizam Ali, seeing the Marathas occupied with their domestic troubles, took the offensive and helped Sabaji to establish himself as a ruler of Berar as against Raghoba's nominee. Hyder Ali, too, took occasion to recover the districts conquered by Madhavrao in the late war. Raghoba first moved against Nizam Ali but when the latter sued for peace offering to cede lands worth twenty lakhs a year, Raghoba, owing to his weakness of character, allowed himself to be deceived by his defeated enemy's professions and took nothing from Nizam Ali. Throwing away deliberately the advantage gained in the campaign either from design or from misplaced generosity he next marched towards the Karnatic.

In the meantime a formidable conspiracy was brewing against Raghoba at the capital. On the tenth day after Narayanrao's murder, Trimbakrao Pethe, Hari Pant Fadke, Nana Fadnavis, and nine others known in history as Barbhais bound themselves by an oath to frustrate the criminal ambitions of Raghoba. The committee won over Sakharam Bapu to their cause and removed Gangabai who was just then pregnant from Poona. The Barbhais formed themselves into a sort of regency under Gangabai and began to govern the country in her name supported by public opinion. Raghoba's adherents were thrown into confinement and the Barbhais' administration received recognition from Sabaji Bhonsle and Nizam Ali, both of whom agreed to support the Regency. On obtaining this alarming news Raghoba patched up a peace with Hyder Ali solely in his own selfish interests and defeated the inferior army of Trimbakrao Mama, one of the conspirators. All his hopes were however shattered by the birth of Gangabai's son, the future Savai Madhavrao. Immediately after this event Sakharam Bapu and Nana Fadnavis secured the investiture of the child as Peshwa. Pursued by the armies under Hari Pant of the Regency and deserted by the people Raghoba was before long a fugitive. All his counter-plots came to nothing and as a last resort he signed a treaty with the arch-enemies of his country, the English, and secured their active help (1775).

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[17] G. Duff, Vol. II, p. 250.

At last the opportunity for which the English had waited for so long a time to take possession of Salsette, Bassein and other adjacent islands had now come and the Bombay Government was too shrewd and selfish not to take the fullest advantage of these internal dissensions of the Marathas. Out of their relations with Raghoba arose the first Maratha war in which the honours of war were divided half to half between the two combatants—the Marathas and the English. The ambition of the Bombay Government to overthrow the Regency single-handed and to carry their protége, Raghoba, to Poona at the head of a victorious march was found to be too great a project for their military resources. When finally the combined English power succeeded in surmounting their serious difficulties, Warren Hastings, the Governor-General, could not get better terms by the treaty of Salbai than the possession of Salsette. The Marathas proved sufficiently strong not to allow the English to assume the suzerain powers just then. They had to wait patiently for another opportunity to be able to carry out their Imperial policy and it was not before the vitality of the Maratha Empire was still further undermined by the progress of their internal jealousies that they succeeded in occupying the paramount position.

The Marathas, threatened as they were by internal and external enemies, conducted themselves on the whole with a fair amount of determination and unity. They yet retained a modicum of national spirit and though there were bitter jealousies and personal rivalries between minister and minister and between minister and feudatory Sirdars they had not yet degraded themselves to that low depth to which they were to sink in the fatal regime of Baji Rao II. The two chief personalities of this period, Nana and Mahadaji, were indeed pursuing their own interests. Each aimed at an ascendency in the internal management of the Empire which the other was studiously endeavouring to prevent. While Mahadaji sought to establish a kingdom virtually independent, Nana's ambition was to bring all and sundry under his own control as the first minister of the Empire. Thus their ultimate views were at variance. Their present interests were, however, in unison and therefore each recognised that the other was necessary to himself in the Maratha Empire. Both possessed enough good sense to perceive the necessity of preserving the strength of the Empire undivided. With Mahadaji's valuable support Nana soon succeeded in removing from his path his rivals at Poona and in concentrating the supreme power in his own hands. He infused vigour into every measure of the government at home and effectively suppressed all opposition. His resourceful mind soon brought into existence an all-India confederacy against the English, and Warren Hastings, the Governor-General, was unable to conduct the war with the Marathas with undivided attention. His serene enduring spirit accepted defeat without despair and his tireless energy raised ever new armies until at last the English were forced to surrender their conquests except Bassein. The great man also won the strategic victory of rendering Raghoba harmless for the future and procuring the government for Savai Madhavrao. The negative victory gained by the Marathas in the 1st Maratha war saved the nation from civil anarchy for the time being and raised the prestige and reputation of Nana Fadnavis so high that he was left undisputed master at Poona.

The disappointed Raghoba spent his last days at Kopargaon where he affected to become a sanyasi and died in 1784.

Like Nana, Mahadaji Shinde also increased his prestige by the treaty of Salbai. He had attained one main object of his policy, a sovereignty virtually independent, without injuring the national interests which bound the Maratha Confederacy together. He had formed a plan of attacking the English in Bengal even before his campaign against Goddard in Gujarat. Nana approved of this design and when Hyder Ali broke with the English he also endeavoured to encourage Mahadaji to prosecute the enterprise. But the contentions amongst the Muslim factions at Delhi subsequent to Najif Khan's death opened a prospect to Mahadaji of realising those schemes in Hindustan on which he had set his heart long ago. This made him court the favour of the English rather than excite their hostility. Warren Hastings was desirous of anticipating Mahadaji by interposing the British influence at the Imperial court. But such a policy would have been dangerous at that time when all their enemies would have at once combined to check their aggrandisement and a serious crisis would have been reached. The Governor-General, therefore, promised Mahadaji that his interests in Hindustan would not be opposed by the English. Thus, he not only diverted Mahadaji's attention by this appeal to his personal fortunes but also obtained the ratification of the treaty of Salbai through him. Nay he achieved more. He secured Mahadaji against the intrigues of Hyder Ali who had offered his support for the proposed invasion of Bengal. The last advantage that Warren Hastings won for the English by his skilful diplomacy was that by his friendship with Mahadaji and by his neutrality in the latter's scheme about the Imperial court at Delhi, he ensured the success of Mahadaji's policy and thus created a good source of friction and misunderstanding between Mahadaji and Nana Fadnavis. Mahadaji's speedy success at Delhi increased his power tremendously and gave him the position of the first Sirdar of the Empire. It also brought him the secret enmity of Nana who was jealous of his rival's rising prestige and power and who, he feared, might use both in deposing him from his office. Let us now notice in subsequent pages the progress of the ambitions of these two rivals, both of whom had emerged victorious from the first Maratha war.

Nana Fadnavis and Mahadaji Shinde

Soon after the treaty of Salbai, Tippu who had succeeded Hyder Ali began to trouble the Brahmin principality of Nargund by raising the tribute. As Tippu persisted in his object of confiscating the principality, Nana Fadnavis whose help the Desai had requested sent Parashram Bhau Patwardhan and Ganeshpant Behere to his relief. Holkar followed with reinforcements and Tippu expressed himself ready for peace. But this was an artifice to deceive Nana. He had promised two years' tribute and had bound himself not to increase the tribute from the Desai. But as soon as the Marathas turned their backs, Tippu broke the late treaty and took possession of the fort by treacherously seizing the chief and his family. He selected one of his daughters for his harem and the rest were tortured to death. He also seized the fort of Kittoor and occupied both the places with strong garrisons. Not satisfied with these acts of unjustified aggression he forcibly circumcised many of the Hindu inhabitants of the country south of the Krishna and two thousand Brahmins destroyed themselves to escape the ignominy. The Marathas secured Nizam's co-operation though not that of the English and the allies took several towns of Tippu. But Tippu was a skilful general and on the whole the advantage of the campaign rested with him. Nevertheless he offered terms as he then contemplated hostility against the English and concluded a disadvantageous treaty. Having for his aim the annihilation of the English power in India he sent envoys to Turkey and France to induce the Sultan and the French to join the league against the English. Tippu next attacked Travancore which was then under English protection. Nana Fadnavis, on hearing of Tippu's attack on Travancore, formed a triple alliance with the Nizam and the English and brought Tippu Sultan to his knees. He was made to cede half of his territories and to pay an indemnity of three crores and thirty thousand rupees. The English wanted to destroy Tippu's power which with its alliance with the French had been a constant menace to the Madras Government but Nana who desired only to reduce his strength opposed the proposal and the English did not succeed in their game. Removal of Tippu, Nana clearly saw, meant the removal of the last barrier to the expansion of the English power in the South.

Of greater importance were the events in the North where Mahadaji Shinde was achieving success for the long-standing Maratha ambitions. Najaf Khan who had regained his supreme position at Delhi after the recall of Visaji Krishna (1773) died in 1782. Afrasaib Khan, his adopted son, succeeded him as the premier noble but the Governor of Agra, Mahomedbeg Hamadani, soon ousted him from this favoured position. Afrasaib Khan invited the help of Mahadaji Shinde and the latter got an excellent opportunity to advance his cherished plan.

He gladly accepted the invitation and joined Afrasaib Khan at Agra. But then Afrasaib Khan was soon assassinated and all the Muslim chiefs by common consent acknowledged Mahadaji's supremacy. He then proceeded to Delhi and offered his services to the Emperor, obtaining in return two patents. The one appointed the Peshwa, viceregent of the Empire; the other vested in himself the command of the army as Deputy of the Peshwa. The Provinces of Agra and Delhi were assigned to him as a guarantee for the pay of the troops but they were subject to a primary of sixty-five thousand as a monthly payment for the personal expenses of the Emperor. Thus far the great game had been won. This event unquestionably made a complete revolution in the position of Mahadaji. Now concentrated in Hindustan his power virtually became that of the Mughal Empire and he got an opportunity and the means of serving the Maratha Empire in a higher sphere.

In the meantime, however, the crisis of his life had arrived but it gave his character an occasion to shine forth in its moral beauty. The resources of the provinces which he had now acquired were from their exhausted state totally inadequate to meet the demands and he soon found that he could pay regularly neither the Emperor nor his own troops. Mahadaji also wanted to organise a regular standing army instead of the services, often imaginary and always weak, of the usurping Barons. He therefore instituted an inquiry into the titles of the holdings of these refractory Barons with a view to resume the incomes where the title was bad and apply them to the purposes of Government. He further demanded the Imperial tribute from the chiefs of Rajputana and the English. The feudal barons as well as the

Rajputs who now saw that the Imperial Power was being wielded by a strong man and that their defiance of the Imperial Authority will no longer be tolerated prepared for resistance. The faction at Delhi opposed to Mahadaji was much strengthened by the Rajput revolt; even the imbecile Emperor who readily became the tool of any new party began to murmur. Thus a storm was raised against Mahadaji all over the North. In 1787 the Rajputs defeated Rajaji Patil and when Mahadaji himself marched against Jaipur, the Rajputs and Mahomed Beg and his nephew Ismail Beg made common cause and forced him to retreat to Gwalior. The cause of this retreat was the desertion of the whole of the Emperor's regular infantry with 80 pieces of cannon. At no period of his life did Mahadaji display greater coolness and fortitude than at this time of serious crisis. If he had committed an error of judgment in choosing a wrong time to enforce his reforms, he showed no craven spirit against adverse fortune. He retreated in good order; he conciliated the Jats and strengthened the garrison of Agra under the command of Lakhba Dada Kerkar, one of the most faithful of his native generals. He made every effort to retrieve his affairs by his own resources but at the same time wrote to Nana Fadnavis for help, urging that a disaster to him would be a disaster to the whole of the Maratha Empire. If he were to be defeated there would be none left in Hindustan to check the growing power of the English, their rivals. He recounted all his former services to Nana and strongly disavowed every feeling of jealousy. "We serve," he wrote, "a common master; let our exertions be directed to the common cause. If you personally entertain jealousy of me ask yourself who supported you against the faction of Moroba and put your rival Sakharam Bapu into your power; who suppressed the insurrections of the pretender Sadashivrao Bhau, beat the English at Tallegaon, maintained a great share of the war against them and concluded an advantageous peace? Think of these services, banish suspicion and silence caluminators who are our mutual enemies; let the cause of the Maratha Nation be upheld in Hindustan and prevent our Empire from being disunited and overthrown." Those observations carried much truth with them. Though by his own prowess he had added to his strength and prestige he always wanted to keep touch with Poona, and never meant to go at the

National Confederacy. Whatever independence he wished to possess, his plan was to secure it within the Confederacy. But the grand aim of Nana was to consolidate the Maratha Confederacy under the authority of the Peshwa and to become its high Chancellor himself. Nana of course was unwilling to relinquish Maratha claims in Hindustan. He had indeed kept ready a force under Ali Bahadur. His idea was to employ it in coming to an understanding with the Rajput States in the name of the Peshwa for the purpose of extending the Maratha influence without confirming the power of his rival. But he had no means of attaining his desired ascendency without an absolute rupture with Mahadaji and that he rightly considered ruinous to the Empire. When, therefore, Nana saw no other alternative he complied with Mahadaji's request grudgingly and sent the help after much delay and with humiliating conditions attached to it. The reinforcements under Ali Bahadur and Tukoji Holkar which were tardily sent did not much help Mahadaji. These troops were granted by Nana on condition that all the territory acquired north of the Chambal should be equally shared by the Peshwa, Mahadaji and Holkar. The conduct of these jealous friends, instigated by Nana, was worse than open hostility and caused endless complications and troubles to Mahadaji. Ali Bahadur and Holkar were more bent on obstructing his measures and more solicitous to share his acquisitions than to unite in upholding the Maratha cause. Mahadaji was saved on this occasion by his own originality in raising a disciplined force under the Great Frenchman, De Boigne, and the loyalty of his own lieutenants like Lakhba Dada Kerkar, Rana Khan, Ambuji Ingle and Rayaji Patil.

Shah Alam freed himself no doubt from Mahadaji's tutelege but was left without his protecting arm as he was soon to learn to his bitter experience. Gulam Kadir, son of Zabita Khan, the Rohilla chief, drove the Maratha garrison from Delhi and forced the unprotected Emperor to make him Amir-ul-Umra. He took Aligad from the Marathas and joining Ismail Beg, Mahadaji's most active enemy, besieged Agra. Their designs were frustrated by the heroic defence of that fort by Lakhba Dada. Gulam Kadir then left Agra to defend his own dominions from a Sikh raid and Mahadaji's army led by De Boigne inflicted a severe defeat on Ismail Khan at Fatepur Sikri and put him to flight. Mahadaji did not march on Delhi at once but stopped at Mathura. Taking advantage of his absence Gulam Kadir and Ismail Beg marched on Delhi and the latter plundered the city, the former blinded the Emperor and perpetrated every sort of inhuman cruelty on the inmates of the palace, of both sexes. Ismail Beg disgusted at the excesses of his colleague joined Mahadaji on a promise of a Jahagir to himself. Gulam Kadir fled to the shelter of the fort of Meerut but was finally captured, mutilated and hanged. Mahadaji then reseated the unfortunate Emperor on his throne with much promptness and did everything in his power to soothe his injured feelings. The blind Emperor ever afterwards felt grateful to Mahadaji for his kindness. The arrival of the Marathas in the Mughal capital was on this occasion hailed with the greatest joy.

In the meanwhile the Jahagir of Gulam Kadir was reduced and the greater part of the Daob with the provinces of Delhi and Agra were annexed to the Maratha Empire. The situation of Mahadaji was, however, by no means secure. The Rajputs still continued their opposition to his authority; his friends Holkar and Ali Bahadur were creating trouble and Ismail Beg was thinking of joining the Rajputs against him. But Mahadaji had now considerably augmented his regular troops under De Boigne and these he now used in crushing the opposition of his enemies. In the bloody battle of Patan, Holkar stood aloof during the engagement but the gallantry and personal energy of De Biogne and the discipline of his battalions secured a great victory for their master. Ismail Beg fought with his usual bravery but his army was completely routed. The Rajputs still maintained the war and a second battle was fought at Merta in which the Rajputs, in spite of the reckless valour of the Rathor cavalry, were again worsted and their army was dispersed. Mahadaji would have completely subjugated the Rajputs but the opposition from Holkar and Ali Bahadur to which he was exposed induced him to grant them peace on their promising to pay a moderate annual tribute.

During all these days Mahadaji had perceived the danger to the Maratha Empire from the English quarters. In his "Final French struggles in India", Col. Malleson remarks, "It must never be lost sight of that the great dream of Mahadaji Shinde's life was to unite all the native powers of India in a Great confederacy against the English. In this respect he was the most far-sighted statesman that India has ever produced. It was a grand idea capable of realisation by Mahadaji alone and which but for his death would have been realised." He was also alive to the internal dangers as he had himself to suffer from Nana's jealousy in his late campaigns against the Rajputs. Hence entrusting his government to the loyal French General De Boigne he proceeded to Poona. His main object seems to be to evolve a scheme for the future constitution of the Empire in which he wanted to provide for the internal autonomy of every member of the Confederacy. As regards the external relations all should meet and agree to a common policy from time to time. The Peshwa should be the central authority as hithertobefore. Thus he wanted by discussion with the Peshwa to make provision for both the dangers his keen eye had foreseen. Incidentally he wanted to assert his due influence in the counsels of the Central Government which was now equal to Nana's autocratic rule at Poona. To settle these matters a personal visit to the Capital of the Empire was quite necessary and as soon as he was free from his troubles in Hindustan he took this constitutional question in hand. The Emperor made the Peshwa's office of Vakil-i-Mutalik hereditary after the battle of Patan on condition of appointing Mahadaji and his posterity his perpetual Deputies. The Emperor also issued an edict prohibiting the slaughter of cows and bullocks throughout the Mughal dominions.

As deputy Vakil-i-Mutalik it was his duty to convey to his master's own hands the Emperor's sign manual and Mahadaji saw that this was also a good occasion for getting his scheme considered by the Poona court. Nana Fadnavis did everything in his power to prevent the Peshwa's acceptance of the titles or insignia. But Mahadaji persisted and permission was formally obtained from the Raja of Satara. The ceremony of the Peshwa's investiture was gone through with the greatest pomp and circumstance.

Mahadaji took great care to remove every ground of friction. To allay the nervous jealousy of Nana in regard to his regular infantry he had only brought with him a small party and had assumed the greatest humility during his stay at Poona. But the " Maratha Machiavelli " only saw deep design in all his acts and sought for a suitable weapon with which to render Mahadaji's departure from Poona inevitable.

This he found ready at hand in Tukoji Holkar who had regarded the growth of Mahadaji's power with rancorous jealousy. He had entertained in his service the Chevalier Du Drenee, another Frenchman, and had asked him to raise disciplined four battalions after Mahadaji's model. While thus preparing himself for war, Tukoji Holkar secretly instigated Ismail Beg to disturb the peace of Hindustan in Mahadaji's absence. De Boigne sent Perron against Ismail Beg and his boisterous career was at once cut short. He was defeated by Perron and sent a prisoner to the Agra Fort. De Boigne was then able to give his full attention to Tukoji Holkar whom the former routed after an obstinate battle at Lakheri. Holkar in impotent rage sacked Ujjain, Shinde's capital, but was forced to accept his inferior position. In the meanwhile discussions as to the accounts of Mahadaji took place at Poona and circumstances occurred which strengthened the mutual jealousy of Mahadaji and Nana.

Their partisans in Hindustan were in a state of open rupture but these two principals maintained for some time outward forms of civility and respect. When accounts of Holkar's defeat reached Poona the relations between Nana and Mahadaji were strained. Nana called in Parashram Bhau with 2,000 horse to his aid as if he was apprehensive of personal violence. This foolish reinforcement gave Mahadaji a pretext to increase greatly his existing army at Poona to bring down one of his infantry brigades under Perron. But these were all diplomatic moves; neither party wanted to go to extremes and positive orders were despatched to their respective officers to refrain from hostile acts and to await the pacific settlement of their dispute by orders from the Peshwa.

Mahadaji had gained the confidence of the young Peshwa by his frank, unreserved manners and had become his constant companion. Nana kept a vigilant watch and it was difficult for Mahadaji to find opportunities of conversing with Savai Madhavrao unobserved. When such opportunities came Mahadaji used to comment on the manner in which the Peshwa was treated and to assure him that he had both the power and the inclination to render him independent of such tutelage. At first Savai

Madhavrao combated Mahadaji's arguments with warmth but soon the customary restraints, unfelt before, began to be irksome and Mahadaji's society became proportionately more desirable. Mahadaji now became all powerful in the country but he did not neglect to cultivate favourable public opinion. He intervened in the public administration of the Poona court and on two occasions got the omnipotent minister's decisions reversed because in both cases Nana Fadnavis was guided more or less by his personal interest. During the minority of the Pant Sachiv Nana assumed charge of his lands but Mahadaji who knew that the proceeding met with general disapprobation interposed, and reestablished him in his possessions against the orders of the minister. Bajirao Moreshwar, the agent whom Nana had placed in charge of the Sachiv's territory, was dismissed by Mahadaji. This open interference occasioned a quarrel which was with difficulty made up by the mediation of Hari Pant Fadke. In the second instance Nana, after accepting a very large nazur, had acknowledged Manajirao, Regent of the Gaikwar's possessions in supersession of the just claim of Govindrao to the same. Mahadaji exposed the cause of Govindrao and procured the repeal of Manaji's appointment. Mahadaji made further undisguised attempts to induce the Peshwa to seek his protection and these so much alarmed the minister that one day he made a most skilful attempt to regain his influence over Savai Madhavrao and he succeeded. He enumerated his services to the Peshwa, described Mahadaji's design of establishing an absolute power over the Brahmin sovereignty, pointed at his foreign troops, his departure from ancient usage, etc. At last he lamented with tears in his eyes the probable consequences of the evil counsels by which he had been misled and dramatically tendered his resignation and declared his resolution to proceed to holy Benares. Savai Madhavrao was greatly affected; Nana was entreated to stay and a promise to be more careful in his future conduct was made. Notwithstanding this success of Nana, Mahadaji by his popularity with the populace and by his great power would probably have triumphed over his rival in the end. But in the midst of these public labours Mahadaji died suddenly in 1794.

The death of Mahadaji Shinde was an event of great political importance. He was the greatest statesman of his age as he was its greatest military leader. He proved his worth as a general in the 1st Maratha War but he was also a man of great constructive genius. He carried to success the unfinished work of Sadashivrao Bhau both in the matter of the expansion and prestige of the Maratha Empire and the Europeanisation of the Maratha army. He was the first man, in spite of the seemingly disastrous lesson of Panipat, to see the value as well as the necessity of quickly adopting the new system. The several wars that were fought with his trained troops under the able general De Boigne soon converted the doubting Thomases and even Holkar who in the beginning was a believer in the old system of guerilla tactics and no infantry, was forced to change his views.

Lakheri in which the new method of warfare was for the first time in Indian history brought into operation by both the parties is a standing tribute to his originality and intellectual vigour. He alone possessed the qualities to make the new system a success and it was due among his other virtues to the admiration inspired by his moral character and the confidence which his subordinates had in the consistency of his conduct. He was a kind master to his soldiers. Unforgiving only to those who showed cowardice in battle, to all others he showed equal favour, solely according to merit and irrespective of caste, creed or colour. By such a system men's hearts are won and great States founded, for, despotic power usually leads to caprice and caprice engenders other vices which ultimately ruin a State. He gave a regular government to the people of Hindustan rescuing them from a state of darkness and bringing prosperity to a harassed country.

Preservation of the Maratha Confederacy, general assertion of internal autonomy of individual Sardars and the formation of one vast combination against the English—these three were his objects for which he paid personal visit to Poona just before he died. It must always be remembered that Mahadaji being alive to the English danger never meant to weaken the Confederacy ideal which he must have been convinced was the only practical ideal. He wisely recognised that the roots of his power were in the Empire of which the Peshwa was the actual head. But he certainly did not like the despotic rule of Nana the only aim of whose intrigues was to preserve the Peshwa's authority intact in his own selfish interests. In fact the position of the Peshwa was never in danger but perhaps Nana's power was. In his attitude to the Confederacy and in his vision of the English ambitions the extent of which he correctly gauged, he was more patriotic, far-sighted and statesmanlike than his rival. Nana relied on intrigues to compass his end of making the power of the Peshwa supreme as it had never been before. Mahadaji was a real statesman whatever may be the opinion of those who falsely accuse him of governing in the place of the Peshwa. His attitude to the overbearing, unprincipled and rasping minister could not be the same as to the Peshwa, his acknowledged master. Hence he wanted merely to free himself and other feudatory chiefs from interference in their internal management, a power which was systematically utilised by the minister only to fill his own coffers. It was the only reasonable policy under the circumstances and this fact is borne out by the intrigues of the next reign.

His attitude to the Peshwa was one of sincere deference, while he never wanted to interfere with the internal affairs of other potentates of the Confederacy. It must be remembered in this connection that he refused point-blank to act against Ahilyabai when asked by Raghoba to do so. When Holkar sacked Ujjain he was in a position to exact any penalty he liked for this wanton act but he forbore from taking vindictive measures against his avowed enemy in the larger interests of the Confederacy. That is also why he never thought of using a force which might have controlled the Maratha Empire against his rival lest Nana should call in the aid of a subsidiary (English) who might swallow the Empire. He was desirous of preserving the Confederacy as it alone could unite the chieftains of the Empire against all foreign enemies. Nana who was inordinately fond of personal power wanted to make his sway absolute over all alike, of course in the name of the minor Peshwa. But his game was lost. Nana's personal ambitions made him blind to the true interests of the Empire and ungenerous to Mahadaji. The "Maratha Machiavelli" would have been beaten at his own game but Mahadaji's untimely death saved him for the time being. Perhaps Mahadaji would have rendered a service both to Nana himself and the Empire if he had driven the minister from office and thus saved him from himself. In his attitude towards the English Mahadaji followed a sound policy. Once or twice he tested their strength indirectly by demanding the tribute for Bengal but having a just appreciation of their growing power he never committed any rash act.

The death of Mahadaji left Nana Fadnavis without a rival in the Maratha Empire. The Peshwa was once more brought under his control and a successful foreign war raised his prestige still higher. There was nothing to be feared from the feudatories.

In 1791 Nana directed the Maratha envoys at Hyderabad to raise the question of the outstanding balances for a series of years on account of Chouth and Sardeshmukhi which had been withheld by Nizam Ali owing to the disorders at Poona. Having asked Raymond to complete his military preparations the Nizam rejected contemptuously all claim and his Diwan Mashir-ul-Mulk grossly insulted the Maratha envoys. War was declared and Nana made gigantic preparations. All the chiefs were summoned to join the National army the supreme command being given to Parashram Bhau Patwardhan. Before the battle had begun in earnest the Mughal army got panicky and the terror-struck Nizam took shelter in the fort of Kharda. The Marathas invested it and before long the Nizam had to offer an abject surrender. Mashir-ul-Mulk who had uttered those vaunting threats was handed over to the Marathas and valuable concessions in territory and in money were made.

The battle of Kharda was the last united national enterprise and the great victory, secured with a loss of barely hundred soldiers, speaks eloquently of the high prestige of the Maratha Army. Nana Fadnavis was now at the summit of prosperity and under his rule the Peshwa's Government would have recovered the tone and vigour of the Great Madhavrao's days. But Nana's love of power soon turned everything topsy-turvy and the reign of civil anarchy began at Poona.

Last Days of the Maratha Empire—the End

The immediate cause of this terrible disaster to the Maratha State was the death of Savai Madhavrao, accidental in the opinion of some historians and by suicide according to others. Although the young Peshwa was now in his twenty-first year Nana who had become accustomed to wielding the supreme power in the State had no intention of parting with it even to the slightest degree. He relaxed nothing of the rigid tutelage in which he had brought up the Peshwa from his early childhood. On the contrary he increased his vigilance over all the State prisoners including the Raja of Satara and the sons of Raghoba whose liberty might, he thought, endanger his own position. He confined as a precaution Baji Rao II, Amritrao, and the adopted son of Raghoba in the fort of Shivner in close custody.

Savai Madhavrao, whom his wives and servants were urging to assert his right to the conduct of Government as Peshwa, had once or twice shown independence of action, notably in the matter of Ghashiram Kotwal who had earned the odium of the Poona citizens by his violent acts and had escaped punishment because of Nana's favourable attitude towards him. The Peshwa now attempted to assert himself on behalf of his cousins. He asked Nana Fadnavis to release them but the old minister knew well that the comely face and seductive personal charm of Baji Rao II concealed a nature as weak as that of Raghoba and as wicked as that of Anandibai.

Unmindful of human nature, Nana treated the prince who had now attained manhood as if he had been a thoughtless child. He had him closely watched and confined Baji Rao II with more strictness than ever. The latter, however, found means to carry on a secret correspondence with his cousin the Peshwa and subtly reminded him of his position which, he suggested, though nominally free was no better than his own open captivity. At last when Nana came to know of this clandestine communication between the two, he severely reproached the Peshwa. This treatment overwhelmed Savai Madhavrao with anger, disappointment, and grief, galled as he already was by restraint. In this state of affairs the death of the Peshwa occurred in 1795 from his fall from the balcony of his palace.

The death of Savai Madhavrao released all the disorderly elements in the State which would have, in any case, sought expression in the body politic sooner or later. Intrigues for appointing the successor at once began, producing a condition of civil unrest at Poona unparalleled in the history of the Maratha Nation. Balloba Tatya, the chief minister of Shinde, persuaded his master Doulatrao to occupy Poona with his regiments, hoping by his master's supremacy to rule the Empire himself. Nana Fadnavis desired to retain his own power by excluding the legitimate heir from succession. Baji Rao was ever anxious to rule as the Peshwa. The Raja Shahu of Satara wanted if possible to recover the Empire of the Bhonsles during the turmoil. Afterwards Holkar whose house had in the beginning been subordinated to Shinde, also joined in the general scramble for supreme power at Poona. Every small jahagirdar or big joined now one party, now another, exactly as his selfish interests dictated, irrespective of any sense of honour or loyalty; there were moves and counter-moves; no one thought of the interests of their poor Country. The Maratha Empire was fast approaching its final catastrophe. Chaos reigned supreme in the proud capital of the Maratha Empire while its short-sighted sons were fighting out their quarrels to gain an upper hand in the counsels of the nation. The condition of the people was indeed tragic to the extreme limit. The fair city was subjected to the worst violence by such a monster as Ghatge. The innocent citizens, during the time their misfortunes lasted, were plundered by parties of soldiers and many of them were subjected to every indignity though they barricaded their doors and defended themselves from the tops and windows of their houses. Respectable persons were dragged forth and made to give up their property. Merchants, bankers, and generally all persons who were supposed to possess wealth were seized and tortured, several of them dying whilst tied to a heated gun. The city of Poona presented a spectacle of a town taken by storm. Firing would go on day and night. Roads in every direction were stopped and all was uproar, plunder, bloodshed, and confusion. The alarm was so universal that "friends marched together in groups with their shields on their arms and their swords in their hands. For several days Poona suffered, with the consent of the new Peshwa, horrors similar to those suffered by the people of Delhi at the hands of Nadir Shah."[18]

From the warring elements two persons, both intriguers of the first water, emerged successful—Nana and Baji Rao II. The latter was installed as Peshwa and the former as minister. The fortunes of Nana were at one time considered very desperate and when he was imprisoned and his property confiscated, people had thought that they would hear nothing more about him. But the resourcefulness of his mind, the vastness of his secret property, the vigour of his judgment and the fertility of his expedients were such that he was justly called the "Maratha Machiavelli". Though he returned as minister it was impossible for him to regain his former power even if it was now doubly necessary that he should conduct the affairs of State unfettered by the influence of such a master as Baji Rao II. These two men have been brought together in a strange manner by identity of their interests but Baji Rao II was not the man to stick to any resolution for any length of time. To trust none and to deceive all was his usual policy and in the end he never failed to lose the game. In cunning vindictiveness and dissimulation it was hard for anyone of his contemporaries to beat him. He was from the beginning such an absolute coward that in a crisis his heart was sure to fail him. Profound in the arts of deceit and vascillating by nature, such a man must necessarily rely on base intrigues to carry him through. He had therefore a passion for intrigues and though devout and pious in outward observances, was immoral to the tips of his fingers. With such a man at the head of the Empire, the country could never have done well and to add to it when Nana Fadnavis died in 1800, "with him departed all the wisdom and moderation of the Maratha Government" as remarked by Col. Palmer. Nana was the greatest civilian minister that the Maratha Nation produced. Methodical and punctual in his habits, Nana was intelligent, quick, and penetrating. His time was strictly regulated and the volume of business personally transacted by him was phenomenal. In this respect he resembled Prince Bismark though he lacked the latter's high political aim, like the unity of the German Empire. Nana at best strove only to keep the Brahmin sovereignty intact as he believed that his personal interests as minister were linked up with its fortunes. We regret he did not perceive the political need of supporting fully Mahadaji Shinde even at the risk of making him more powerful, even if he had to part with some of his personal power. He ought not to have allowed misunderstandings to multiply and ought to have discussed frankly with Mahadaji the measures that the latter was inclined to suggest for the future government. He ought not to have fomented, for temporary gains, the jealousy between the two Maratha houses in the North for he could have easily known that such domestic divisions ultimately would ruin all alike. Events subsequent to Mahadaji's death proved it to the cost of Nana himself and our sympathy goes to him in the misfortunes of his last days. He overshot his mark and eventually brought about the tragic death of Savai Madhavrao. Yet Nana was a great patriot. Though jealous of Mahadaji's growing power, he never thought of calling in the aid of the enemies of the country just as Baji Rao II afterwards did.

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[18] G. Duff, Vol. III, p. 151.

No one ever regarded the English with more jealousy and alarm as G. Duff says.[19] He was decidedly against the admission of a body of foreign troops as proposed by the Marquis of Wellesly. He was anybody's equal in diplomacy but the social and political machine that he managed with such conspicuous ability was not the same as the English machine. Hence his failure, hence also Mahadaji's failure in the end. To his ambition which was not always restrained by principle, must be added two other failings of a more or less minor type—his weakness for women and money.

After Nana's death affairs at Poona went from bad to worse. Baji Rao II and Doulatrao Shinde who had become all-powerful at Poona quarrelled over the treasures of Nana which each wanted to obtain for himself. Baji Rao II further imprisoned treacherously Nana's friends and resolved to crush the Patwardhans. Doulatrao was now the master of the situation. His control over the Peshwa was complete and fearing that Baji Rao II intended to fly he kept a guard for some time over his palace. Baji Rao II saw that his condition was by no means improved by Nana's death. So he instigated Jaswantrao Holkar to invade Shinde's dominions and this forced Doulatrao to return to Hindustan.

Rid of Doulatrao for the time being, he indulged in his passion for revenge. His victims were the families that had opposed his father, the prominent among these being the family of Raste. He captured and brutally killed Vithoji Holkar, the brother of Jaswantrao and a friend of Nana. Jaswantrao vowed vengeance and abandoning his plans against Shinde marched straight on Poona. The chicken-hearted Peshwa fled to Bassein and Holkar took possession of Poona and mercilessly plundered the inhabitants. In the meantime Baji Rao II signed the treaty of Bassein and sacrificed his independence to the English who had strengthened their position by their recent conquest of Tippu. The English seized the golden opportunity of the disordered state of the Maratha Empire and made preparations to make themselves permanent in India. They had already removed (1799) Tippu from the political arena and the Nizam had become their subordinate ally. Now Baji Rao II opportunely sought their protection. In 1803 General Wellesly entered Poona. But Shinde and Bhonsle who regarded the Peshwa's connection with the English with aversion as a national disgrace decided to offer battle in the cause of the Maratha Independence. Every attempt was made to induce Holkar to join them but Jaswantrao was not patriotic enough to subordinate his jealousy to the larger interests of the Nation, and foolishly remained aloof. The foreigners in Shinde's service at this point deserted their master and the Marathas were defeated by the English at Assaye (1803) and Laswari (1803) and Shinde and Bhonsle were also forced to become subordinate allies of the English. In 1805 Holkar too had to accept the subsidiary alliance. The English now became the foremost power in India.

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[19] *History of the Marathas*, Vol. III, p. 188.

Baji Rao II then began to intrigue with feudatories against his new masters but he had not learnt wisdom all these days. He carried out his favourite plan of sequestering the jahagirs of all whom he considered the political opponents of his family and appropriated the revenues to his own use. Such was the condition of Pratinidhi, Raste, and Baburao Fadke, son of the gallant Hari Pant. By his vindictive policy he not only lost sympathy of his Sardars but by his system of revenue farming he made his subjects long for a change of Government even if it could not be other than that of the foreigners. Peace and security were what the harassed people now longed for; they had enough of wars, plunders, tortures, and famines. But the heroic Baji Rao II was thinking of driving the English from Poona. His dreams were finally shattered at Koregaon and Khadki where the English won easy victories and he was to spend his last days at Bithur on the banks of the Ganges. At Bithur, Baji Rao II was provided with every luxury, was shown every conisderation. At Longwood Napoleon was subjected to petty tyranny and his last days were very much embittered. But

Baji Rao II had all he wanted—an ample pension, a vast palace, most beautiful dancing girls in Asia. Thus ended Baji Rao's dream of re-establishing his authority as the head of the Maratha Empire. The English stepped into his shoes as the suzerain of the Confederacy and the Maratha Empire which his ancestors had done so much to create came to an inglorious end.

The Maratha Nation had travelled far on the road to degeneration since the glorious days of the Great King. The Marathas were still a martial race but the nation which once produced a Shivaji, a Baji Rao I, a Madhavrao, and a Mahadaji had now fallen so low that it could give birth to no better men than a Doulatrao, a Jaswantrao, and a Baji Rao II. What a world of difference from Shivaji the Great to Baji Rao II! Once a race of conquering warriors the Marathas in their turn were conquered by a Western Nation and the least that we can say with regard to their success is that they richly deserved it. The discussion in the next two chapters will make this perfectly clear.

PART III

CHAPTER VIII

CAUSES OF THE RISE OF THE MARATHA EMPIRE

WE propose in these two last chapters to take a review of the causes of the rise of the Maratha Empire and its decline and fall in the beginning of the 19th century. In the foregoing brief sketch of the historical background we have traced from time to time such causes, and all these threads will now be brought together for a general discussion and final appraisal. What were the factors which contributed firstly to the rise of the Maratha State and secondly to the Maratha Empire?

(1) *The Physical Environment of the Marathas*

Buckle [1] has pointed out that the type of man and of society is influenced by the general aspects of nature.

Every State consists ultimately of a number of individuals each having certain physical and mental characteristics, existing in certain relations with one another, and the whole existing in certain natural environment. The physical environment of a State constantly modifies the life of both the individual and the group. These in turn constantly modify their environment; and the relation of individuals to one another modifies both the individual and the group.[2] The contour of the earth's surface, climate, resources, and the general aspects of nature form the background of all human existence and constantly condition all human institutions. Political existence is one of the forms of social activity and as such it is modified by the physical environment in which that activity is carried on; while the individual and the State are thus influenced by natural environment, Man is not wholly subordinate to it. He can modify his environment; with the growth of intelligence comes the mastery of man over natural forces and the creation of more favourable conditions. Almost all the arts and inventions that mark the progress of civilization are steps towards the control of the natural environment.

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[1] *Civilization in England*, Vol. I, Chapter II, pp. 30-113.

[2] Montesqieu: *The spirit of laws*, Bks. XIV-XVIII.

The Maratha National character with its good points and defects must have been partly at any rate the result of the physical environment of their country—Maharashtra. But the nature of their country also facilitated the rise of the Marathas in the beginning of the 17th century. The Maratha race occupies the country lying between the Indian Ocean and the river Warda. Their northern boundary is the Satpura Range and they extend to Goa on the West Coast. Their strength lies in the inaccessible barriers of the Western Ghats which climb precipitously to the great plateau that extends eastward with a gradual slope far beyond the Maratha limits to the Bay of Bengal.

"The whole of the Ghats and neighbouring mountains often terminate towards the top in a wall of smooth rock, the highest points of which as well as detached portions on insulated hills form natural fortresses where the only labour required is to get access to the level space which generally lies on the summit. Various princes at different times have profited by these positions. They have cut flights of steps or winding roads up the rocks, fortified the entrance with a succession of gateways and erected towers to command the approaches; and then studded the whole region about the ghats and their branches with forts which, but for frequent experience, would be deemed impregnable."[3]

Between the ghats and the sea lies Konkan, a narrow strip of rugged country. "Here deep valleys and torrent beds lead from the rocks and forests of the mountain ridge to the fertile plains of the humid tract near the sea where the torrents merge in sandy creeks among thickets of mangroves."[4]

Sidney Owen[5] says, "The broken and contorted land writhing from the rugged and indented sea margin, shoots aloft in steep and terrific cliffs and craggy summits whose beauty and majesty must be seen to be understood. Magnificent forests clothe these elevations and spread far down into the wild country below, and extend their mysterious and treacherous shade for many a mile along the table-land above. Impetuous torrents leap from mountain sides, in their headlong career sea-ward, the uneven craggy surface of the coastland; and the hollow nullas of the dry season are, on the approach of rain, transformed, in a few hours, into deep, furious, and impassable cataracts. The thunderstorms of these regions are terrific; the deluges of rain, violent, copious, and frequent beyond all comparison elsewhere in India. Roads throughout the greater part of the country there are none; the character of the ground and the luxuriance of the forest jungles alike preclude them."

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[3] Elphinstone: *History of India*, pp. 600-601.

[4] Stanley Lane Poole: *Aurangzeb*, p. 152.

[5] *India on the Eve of the British Conquest*, p. 22. Dr. Fryer has described vividly his ascents of the ghats in his *New Account*—Chapter IV, Letter III.

This country, the general aspect of which is hilly, is the most salubrious of the whole peninsula of India. Although not the most fertile, the country enjoys the advantage of the good and bracing climate which distinguishes it from the dry and moist extreme of heat and cold of the temperatures of the plains in Northern India and the lowlands.[6] The summits are frequently crowned or girded towards the top by large basaltic rocks. These, with little aid from art, are capable of being formed into fortresses which, independent of the extreme difficulty of approach, often seem in themselves impregnable. In many of them are springs of the finest water and in all supply can be secured in tanks or reservoirs during the periodical rains from May to October. Throughout that period of the year it is scarcely possible for troops to act in the Ghat-Matha; as superadded to the steep, rugged rocky hills and the deep winding dells, covered, like the mountains, by high trees or tangled with low impervious brushwood, there is almost perpetual rain. Thus the peculiar formation of the country, its precipitous mountains, unaccessible valleys and impregnable hill-forts render it at once the country of all others the most favourable for defence and the most dangerous to the invader.[8]

In a military sense there was probably no stronger country in the world,[9] and Shivaji the Great so thoroughly grasped this fact that he never failed to profit by the natural strength of his country. That is why, as we have seen before, he always attached the greatest importance to his numerous forts and even kept them in the most efficient condition of military preparedness. The natural features mentioned above and its position on the high road between Northern India and the Southern Peninsula, says Ranade, give it commanding advantages denied to the other table-lands of Mysore and Malwa which alone can be compared with it.[10]

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[6] Ranade: *Rise of the Maratha Power*, p. 19.

[7] G. Duff: *History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, p. 7. Bombay Gazetteer, Vol. XVIII, pp. 9-10; Vol. XIX, p. 16.

[8] Sir Edward Sullivan: *The Conquerors, Warriors & Statesmen of India*, p. 369.

[9] Grant Duff, Vol. I, p. 7.

This is then the first factor in the conditions of those times which made the rise of the Maratha State possible.

(2) *The National Character of the Marathas*

The second factor was the Maratha National Character. Elphinstone describes them, "As small sturdy men, well made, though not handsome. They are all active, laborious, hardy, and persevering. If they have none of the pride and dignity of the Rajputs they have none of their indolence or their want of worldly wisdom. A Rajput warrior, as long as he does not dishonour his race, seems almost indifferent to the result of any contest he is engaged in.

A Maratha thinks of nothing but the result and cares little for the means if he can attain his object. For this purpose he will strain his wits, renounce his pleasures and hazard his person; but he has not a conception of sacrificing his life or even his interest for the point of honour. This difference of sentiment affects the outward appearance of the two nations; there is something noble in the carriage even of the ordinary Rajput and something vulgar in that of the most distinguished Mahratta.

The Rajput is the most worthy antagonist. The Maratha the most formidable enemy; for he will not fail in boldness and enterprise when they are indispensable and will always support them or supply them with statagem, activity, and perseverance. All this applies chiefly to the soldiery to whom more bad qualities might fairly be ascribed. The mere husbandmen are sober, frugal, and industrious and though they have a dash of the national cunning, are neither turbulent nor insincere."[11]

As early as the 7th century of the christian era Hiven Tsiang, a famous Chinese traveller, thus noted the character of the Maratha people: "Their manners are simple and honest. They are tall, haughty and supercilious in character. Whoever does them a service may count on their gratitude but he that offends them will not escape their revenge. If anyone insults them they will risk their lives to wipe out the affront. If any apply to them in difficulty they will forget to care for themselves in order to flee for his assistance. When they have an injury to avenge they never fail to give warning to their enemy."

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[10] *Rise of the Maratha Power*, p. 20.
[11] *History of India*, p. 601.

The racial character was somewhat modified in the course of the next ten centuries. The disappearance of the protecting support of the Hindu monarchies, the growing intolerance of the Muslim occupation of their country and the ravages of frequent wars between rival States forced the later Marathas, as Sircar says,[12] to be more cunning and less chivalrous. But in many of the characteristics thus noted by the Chinese scholar we may detect the qualities that distinguished the career of Shivaji the Great and which enabled the Marathas to withstand the forces of the Great Mughal himself.[13]

The natural environment had a great influence in the formation of the Maratha character and Maratha society. The nature of their country made intercourse with the outer world difficult and the Marathas lived an isolated and self-contained life. There were no rich courts, popular cities or prosperous marts. The flood of invading armies had been broken at the foot of the hills and in spite of the triumphant march of Malik Kaffur, the Maratha country had never been subdued like the country North of the Vindhyas. Unlike the Gangetic plains, it could not be conquered and annexed by one cavalry dash or even one year's campaigning. The Ghats and the Konkan had been the safe retreats of wild beasts and wiry Marathas, while the richer plains had been the scenes of bloody revolutions and rapine.

An undeveloped economic system made land the chief form of wealth and it was to this fact that the Maratha owed his intense love of his watans or lands inherited from ancestors for which they had paid dearly even with their lives. A Maratha would in those days do anything for retaining or acquiring his patch of ground and this love of land led very often to want of unity among them and to those numerous family feuds among the Deshmukhs and Deshpandes of which we now possess an ample record. The Marathas had from time immemorial been an agricultural people amongst whom trade or the profession of a merchant was always held in contempt. The more ambitious and enterprising among them sought bigger prizes and greater rewards in the military service of the monarchies of the Central plateau. There an able partisan leader was sure of his high salary, noble rank or it may be the proud position of a king-maker. War had a natural fascination for the fighting classes. The trace of ancient Rajput blood in their veins may partly account for their valour and love of warfare. Thus war and agriculture were the two chief occupations of the Marathas in the medieval age and both were interchangeable; the Maratha peasant was ready at a moment's notice to turn his ploughshare into a sword.

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[12] *Shivaji and His Times*, p. 9.
[13] Rawlinson: *Shivaji the Maratha*, p. 19.

But whether a peasant or a soldier, Nature fostered in the Maratha, an innate love of independence which has made him all along rebellious in spirit. Hence his greatest weakness of character, viz., an impatience of control and defiance of authority also proceeds from the same circumstances. Their physical environment developed in them other qualities—self-reliance, courage, perseverance, a stern simplicity, a rough straightforwardness, a sense of social equality and consequently pride in the dignity of man as man.[14] In the lonely struggle with nature and wild beasts the Marathas learnt greater cunning without losing their former valour and hardiness. Indeed in this combination of courage, cleverness and power of endurance, in his ability to plan and execute surprise and night attacks, in his skill to extricate himself from a tight corner or to vary his tactics to the changing phases of a battle without waiting for guidance from a superior, it is hardly possible to beat the Maratha soldier.

In ancient Maharashtra there was no parasite class, says Sircar,[15] and the reason was in such a country hilly in its character and poor in soil no man could have a sheltered life. Everyone had to work and work with his hand. Even the village headman who neither sowed nor spun had to render social service as a collector of revenue or a local judge or policeman to earn his hereditary fee on which he lived. A rich man was a rarity and where sometimes a rich landlord was to be found his wealth consisted of grain-heaps and armed retainers rather than of gold and silver. Their temples dependent on voluntary gifts were poorer than the grand and wealthy Madras temples.

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[14] Sircar: *Shivaji and His Times*, p. 9.
[15] *Shivaji and His Times*, p. 7.

Elegance and refinement were unknown to such a society. Sircar remarks, "If culture can be rightly defined as the employment of the intellect in pleasure then there is no room for culture among men who have to sacrifice pleasure to the bare necessaries of life. Where nature enforces a spartan simplicity then there can be no luxury, no learned leisure (except among the priests), no aesthetic development, no polished manners even."[16] Verily poverty and simplicity go together and the Maratha society in the 16th century had one compensating advantage. There were fewer social distinctions and these were less sharp than among the richer and more civilised communities. In a simple society like that of the early Marathas, the comparatively richer man had his social value as a fighter or a labourer. He at least preserved his self-respect because few having anything to share none was tempted to be a professional beggar or a hanger-on as at Agra or Delhi. Poverty and immemorial custom alike preserved the women of Maharashtra (except among certain higher castes) from the seclusion of the harem and thus the effective strength of society was not only increased but also it gained in health and sweatness.

We shall now turn to other traits of Maratha Character on its worst side. One such, viz., their quarrelsome nature and want of unity in their ranks has been alluded to above. In the mediaeval age the Maratha did not think it unpatriotic according to the prevailing ideas of honour to go over to his country's enemies if for any reason he was dissatisfied. Very often he would rebel against the constituted authority. Another defect of his character was that with all his simplicity, hardihood and sense of equality he was no more proof against bribery and corruption than the Spartans of ancient Greece. Want of business capacity and an accommodating spirit were also other defects of the Maratha in those days. As we shall have opportunity to refer to these defects hereafter in details we simply mention them here. Along with this, one other point that must be given due weight is that there is a proper proportion of the different ethnic elements and the institutions like the Village Panchayats and Ryotwari Tenure of land have maintained an equilibrium which is scarcely to be found elsewhere in India. If Ryotwari Tenure gave the Maratha an inordinate love of his land for which he lived and died and which led inevitably to blood feuds, it also made him more democratic in character than in other parts of the country. The Marathas had never been completely subjugated and the Muslim domination never acquired any strong or permanent hold over their country. The sense of local autonomy and independence have been developed to a great extent and this prevented the country from being retained under one political control for a long time both under Hindu and Muslim Rulers. Further, the Marathas in the service of the Kings of Bijapur, Golkonda, and Ahmednagar, received training in diplomacy, finance, and war, and their ambitions were roused. We have already seen how Shahaji was the inspirer[17] of Shivaji the Great and all those officers who toiled with the Great chief to make his Government a success were men who were trained under Shahaji.

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[16] Ibid., p. 8.

The point to be remembered, however, is that war, the greatest regenerator of virtue as Treitschke would have it,[18] and the iron discipline of their masterly King kept the defects under check during the early stages of their career and brought out all the dormant capacities with the result that their daggers soon cut their name deep in the annals of India.

(3) *The Religious, Social, and Literary Movement*

The advent of the Muslims in India as conquerors with the militant creed of Islam produced great reaction on the religious and social outlook of the Hindus. Hinduism failed to absorb the Muslims as it had absorbed the Greeks, Huns, Scythians and Sakas who were completely merged in the native population. The idolatry and elaborate ritual of the Hindus did not appeal to the Muslims who tenàciously adhered to their simpler creed. The necessity of staying together in the same land in spite of the difference in their religions soon created in the minds of both the parties a desire to reconcile the two peoples. The Muslims realised the impossibility of crushing the Hindus completely while the Hindus learnt by experience that it was useless to wage perpetual war against foes who possessed superior strength and who had come to stay, in their country. Intermarriages,[19] royal patronage and sympathy for the Hindus, the influence of the Hindu converts, and the healing balm that Time applied tended to bring about a sympathetic frame of mind and a better understanding between the two peoples. The teachings of the saints both Muslim and Hindu who appealed to all men without distinction of caste or creed removed many angularities on both sides and gave rise to the fusion of the two faiths. Islam brought a new spirit of the oneness of God to the worshippers of many Gods and a new hope of social justice to the low caste Hindus. The simplicity of the Muslim creed which asserted the oneness of God emphatically, made a deep impression on such teachers of mankind as Nanak, Namdeo, Kabir, Ramanand, Chaitanya, and others, and set on foot throughout India a new religious and social movement. The history of this religious revival is the history of the Bhakti cult.

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[17] Dr. Balkrishna: *Shivaji the Great*, Vol. I, pp. 166-68.
[18] M. A. Miigge: *Treitschke*, pp. 30-45.

In Maharashtra the religious revival covered a period of nearly five centuries and had a superior efficacy than in the other parts of the country. The Bhakti school of thought was represented in this land by some fifty Saints and Prophets of whom the chief were Dnyaneshwar (13th century), Namdeo (14th), Eknath (16th), and Tukaram (1st half of the 17th). Like the political movement of the day the religious movement was not the work of either one man or one caste or of one sex either. Some of these Saints and Prophets of Maharashtra were women, a few were Muslim converts to Hinduism; nearly half of them were Brahmins while the other half contained representatives from among all the other castes, Marathas, Kunbis, tailors, gardeners, goldsmiths, repentant prostitutes, and slave girls and even the Mahar outcastes. And this fact clearly testified to its mass character and widespread popular influence and appeal.

It began in Maharashtra even before the Muslim conquest

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[19] *Cf.* "The traditional devotion and tenderness of Indian motherhood helped greatly to soften the ferocity of the Turk and the Mongol Nomad" —Howell.

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with Dnyanadev who wrote for the first time his famous commentary on the Bhagwatgita in the spoken language, Marathi, and ended with Tukaram. Popular imagination attributed to these persons miraculous powers but the Saints and Prophets themselves did not claim them.[20] Some of them had to suffer social persecution but the struggles of their lives vindicated the eternal verities of Man's higher spiritual life. In this respect priceless indeed was the work that the Saints and Prophets of Maharashtra accomplished.

These Saints and Prophets denounced idolatry and caste, rebelled against the elaborate yet meaningless ritual and empty forms of orthodox Hinduism, raised their voice against self-mortifications, fasts, penances and endless pilgrimages, condemned yoga austerities and polytheistic worship, and taught supremacy of one God. They preached that true religion consisted in Bhakti or true devotion to God and pointed out the value of repeating His name. They pleaded for humility, love, and purity of life, and urged men to have pity for the sorrows of Mankind and to be kind towards all creatures.

Such a movement, religious and moral first and social afterwards, in our opinion, could not have been from its very nature, the cause even to the smallest extent of the Political Revolution which was exclusively the work of Shivaji the Great. It was not even the work of Ramdas whose work began later on when the Swarajya movement had already begun and progressed considerably and whose teachings, important as they were, were generalizations of the philosophy of conduct evolved by Shivaji the Great and probably suggested to the patron saint of Maharashtra by the practice and example of the Great King. Ranade, however, remarks, "The Political Revolution was preceded and in fact to some extent caused by a religious and social upheaval which moved the entire population.[21] The learned author further says, "The fact was that, like the Protestant Reformation in Europe in the sixteenth century there was a religious, social and literary Revival and Reformation in India but notably in the Deccan in the 15th and 16th centuries. What Protestantism did for Western Europe in the matter of Civil liberty was accomplished on a smaller scale in Western India."[22] In a later chapter Ranade draws the "curious parallel between the history of Reformation movement in Western Europe and the struggle represented by the lives and teachings and writings of these Saints and Prophets who flourished about the same time in Maharashtra.[23]

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[20] Dr. P. R. Bhandarkar: *Two Masters: Jesus and Tukaram*, p. 28.

[21] *Rise of the Maratha Power*, p. 9.

Then again Ranade[24] remarks, that "the political movement was itself only a reflection" of the religious development "which was at the same time going on all over the country." In his chapter on "the Saints and Prophets of Maharashtra," Ranade describes the principal features of the religious movement and says that Ramdas Swami had these features in view when he advised Shivaji's son to follow in his father's footsteps and propagate this faith (Maharashtra Dharma).

Thus Ranade (1) identifies the Bhagwat Dharma of the Saints and Prophets with the "Maharashtra Dharma" of Ramdas Swami, (2) says that the Bhakti School of thought achieved for Maharashtra what Protestant Reformation did for Europe, and (3) concludes, therefore, that the Bhakti Movement was a powerful operative cause and a determining factor of the political revolution. We are primarily concerned here with his conclusion that the religious revival was the cause of the rise of the Maratha State but to elucidate the point it is necessary to examine all the points.

Firstly, the religious revival of Maharashtra can never be compared to the Protestant Reformation of Europe though Ranade has pointed out some superficial resemblance between the two movements. In essentials the two movements differed as widely as anything. Martin Luther was bold, headstrong, willing to pit his own opinions against those of the world and yet possessed ability, tact, a love of sound knowledge. Educated at the University of Erfurt, Luther was a professor of theology at the University of Wittenburg. Our Tukaram was, in the main, an ignorant simpleton whatever may be his moral or spiritual grandeur in the opinion of some.

Luther, Cranmer, Zwingli, Calvin, and Knox were fierce men who broke off communion with ancient church and made an open breach with the government and doctrines of the Catholic Church. Their attack on the abuses of the church was so violent, their "protest" was so effective that their movement came to be known as Protestant Revolt. Theirs was the spirit on an Iconoclast and they were not afraid of any controversy. Greater in extent, wider in content, deeper and revolutionary in spirit and sweeping in its results, the Protestant Reformation was a political and social movement and led to sweeping reforms in the Catholic system.[25]

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[22] Ibid., pp. 10-11.
[23] *Rise of the Maratha Power*, p. 149.
[24] Ibid., p. 143.

On the contrary the Bhakti Movement was chiefly a religious and moral movement and dealt with the social abuses in a halting and half-hearted manner. It had none of the decisiveness, definiteness and virulence which characterised the Protestant Movement. Our Bhaktas never attempted to build up a new social order. Neither were they reformers setting out to attack abuses. They were primarily servants of Vithoba whose object was to sing the praises of their Master. They were sages who had hardly any idea of reforming Hinduism on national lines but who had lofty visions, were personally true to them, enjoyed them and tenaciously treasured them. It was only by accident that they were sometimes led into conflict with other person's creeds or religious beliefs. The fact is that the Saints of the Bhakti School were of a pacific turn of mind and did not love controversy or contest with anybody. The Bhakti School neither started as a revolt against nor aimed at the demolition of any established system. They lacked the militant spirit and self-assertive energy of the vigorous Protestants. Ranade himself says, "They were meek and suffering men who placed their trust in Providence."[26] The easy-going tolerance of the Bhaktas contrasts sharply with the manly defiance of the Protestants. It is always possible that they kept to the last some sympathy with ideas really hostile to their own and even expressed it. There are so many inconsistencies and contradictions of thought and practice in the writings and teachings of these Saints and Prophets that we can unhesitatingly say that they have accepted mutually exclusive positions. This is quite clear from their attitude to conventional beliefs and practices of Hinduism by which they were surrounded. Let us take a few examples. They have condemned Idolatry yet Namdev and Tukaram continued Idolatrous practices. The Saints regarded the worship of Vithoba the Idol at Pandharpur with all its traditional ceremonies as sanctioned by time and custom on the one hand and by the wish of the God on the other. At the same time they desired something very much higher than the ceremonies, something much more inward and spiritual, but they nowhere condemn these particular ceremonies and believe that they make some sort of impression on the divine nature.

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[25] Refer to *Political and Social History of Modern Europe*—Hayes, Vol. I, pp. 112-169.

[26] *Rise of the Maratha Power*, p. 148.

What is the result of this ambiguity on so vital a matter? There must have been millions of Marathi-speaking Hindus, as they are even now, who followed only the idolatrous part of their examples, viz., their worship of the Idol of Vithoba at Pandharpur, forgetting the lofty principles of the Saints.

They condemned pilgrimages to holy places, lustrations in holy rivers and strict observance of holy seasons. On this subject as with regard to images they halted between two opinions. Tukaram in several places maintains the value of pilgrimages, several times he mentions the Ganges with respect. It is certain that they always observed Ekadashi fast in spite of their objection to fixed seasons. The Saints taught that God does not consider a man's caste and that all worshippers are equally dear to Him and yet they did practically nothing to enforce, like the Protestants, this far-reaching principle. Their noble protest against caste remained for ever academic. They never took any strong line against caste. Probably in practice they acquiesced in it, retaining its rules only so far as to permit all worshippers of the upper castes to mix freely in the gatherings on the shores of Bhima. It never entered their head that there was anything open to criticism in the ordinary treatment of the "pariah" classes. Accepting caste as an institution of the Hindu world and looking upon it as an inevitable part of Hindu social organisation, the only thing that troubled them was that it prevented humble men from embracing Vithoba's feet. In spite of the democratic influence of the Bhakti Movement no outcaste was admitted to Bhagwat temples including that of Vithoba. The persecution of Chokhamela by the high caste Brahmins who refused him entrance into the central shrine is well known. In personal inward religion these Saints were democratic enough but they were too much of the "mild Hindu" to fight the battles of religious rights and privileges. They only preached good principles, pleaded pathetically for the outcastes but never "protested" like the European Reformers. Similarly in their poems there is no hostile tone towards the Brahmins. Passages even occur where men are censured for not freely supporting them. "Should a Brahmin lose all his attributes still he is supreme in the three worlds," says Tukaram. Yet there are passages in which Brahmins who neglect their duties are censured. Personally these Saints revered Brahmins. Whether, therefore, their mild teachings against caste lapsed through lack of courage or of conviction or of inspiration, the Bhakti Movement had one consequence. While the saints sought to abolish the priestly caste and to make the worship of God open to all irrespective of caste, the Movement had little real effect upon life in practice. Even to this day Brahmins who devoutly recite Tukaram's verses hold jealously to caste distinctions.

They did not condemn Sati, which rite some of them notably Tukaram refer to as an example of fortitude. They shared the feeling of their countrymen about cows, Vedas, Puranas, etc. Therefore to call the Saints and Prophets "revolutionists", as were the Protestants in the real sense, or represent the devotees as revolting from orthodox Hinduism in the way in which the Protestant Reformers did against the Church of Rome is to misunderstand their teachings. They were always moral and devout, never philosophical; not having any social ideals, they were never "crusaders".

The point will be further clear if we examine the defects of this movement as given by Ranade.[27] We agree that as a result of this movement there was some improvement, though not "steady growth", as Ranade says, in the moral tone of the Maratha society, that it gave sanctity to family relations and that it checked to a certain extent polytheism.

But we beg to differ from the learned author in respect to the following points: (1) Ranade says, "It modified the strictness of the old spirit of caste exclusiveness." It did not modify anything in practice. The caste exclusiveness continued as before in all its rigours to comparatively modern times for preaching of a doctrine does not mean that it is followed in practice. This is so in this country even today; there is a wide gulf between teachings and practice. (2) "It raised the Sudra class to a position of spiritual power and social importance, almost equal to that of the Brahmins." The social superiority of the Brahmins was never shaken. It continues so with some modifications even to this day. Individually a Sudra may be as spiritual as a Brahmin but that does not give in our society any social importance to the man unless he were to give out that he has miraculous powers. (3) "It raised the status of women." At least in Tukaram's day the social status of women had not been much changed. It has not been raised very much even now. The Saint of Dehu writes about Woman as if she must forever occupy the narrow and confined sphere allotted to her in the Hindu society. His poems have no recognition of her much needed restoration to her proper position in Hindu society. In view of the fact that there were a few women among the Bhakti Saints and Poets, it is all the more surprising that "Tukaram speaks of women in a manner that is far from dignified."[28] "It made the nation more humane, at the same time more prone to hold together by mutual tolerance." The Hindu in matters of religious faith has all along been tolerant. That does not mean that he became either humane or prone to hold together. The whole of the Maratha history falsifies this statement. Humane men cannot make good soldiers and Marathas were the best soldiers of their time. As regards proneness to unity the less said the better in an age in which disunity was the rule. (4) "It suggested and partly carried out a plan of reconciliation with the Muslims." In that case the religious movement must have indeed been an impediment in the path of the political movement which was directed against the Muslim enemies of Maharashtra. (5) "It subordinated the importance of rites and ceremonies and of pilgrimages and fasts and of learning and contemplation, to the higher excellence of worship by means of love and faith." Many orthodox Hindus who lived side by side with the Warkaris or the followers of the Saints went on with their rites and ceremonies, etc., as before. Even among the Warkaris there were rites and ceremonies, pilgrimages and fasts. If he subordinated learning to Bhakti then it could not have done much good to society. (6) "It tended, in all these ways, to raise the nation generally to a higher level of capacity both of thought and action and prepared it in a way no other nation in India was prepared to take the lead in re-establishing a united native power in the place of foreign domination." This view, in our opinion, is grossly exaggerated. Even granting that it produced all the results which Ranade notices, still they have no connection with capacity of thought much less of action. Capacity to think independently and to act for oneself depends entirely upon different forces than those which can be the result of the Bhakti School of thought. We do not say that it produced no effect whatsoever on the thoughts of men. But we certainly hold that this movement is incapable, in its very nature, of raising men's capacity to think or act in a real sense; if at all, it cramps free thinking and independent action.

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[27] *Rise of the Maratha Power*, pp. 171-172.

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[28] Dr. P. R. Bhandarkar: *Two Masters: Jesus & Tukaram*, p. 14.

Thus the whole spirit of the Bhakti Movement is contrary to that of the Protestant Reformation and we think Ranade is not justified in making any comparison between the two Movements. It is the spirit of any movement that matters and we must not be deceived by points of superficial similarity. While Ranade did a distinct service to Maratha History in calling public attention to the religious movement, in assessing its nature and value to the political movement he has committed an error of judgment. Ranade's aim of proving that the rise of the Maratha Power was not sudden like a conflagration (as G. Duff says) and his own leanings towards the Bhakti School of thought have, in our opinion, betrayed him into committing such an error. It is quite certain that the rise of the Maratha State was not fortuitous or accidental but we must look elsewhere for the causes of its success.

Our view of the religious movement is that it was never a cause of the political movement. The same environment, viz., political subjection, religious persecution and economic misery produced different effects on the minds of two different sets of people holding different temperaments. It is possible for different groups to live in the same society and work for different ideals.

Hence we hold two separate movements sprang up in Maharashtra, one religious and the other political. There was interaction of the one on the other but the one cannot be *ipso facto* the result of the other as their aims and ideals are not the same. The Saints did not give much thought to the Muslims or considered that a political revolution was what the times needed. Directly or indirectly they never made any reference to political questions nor can the political movement be the logical conclusion of the Bhakti Movement, arrived at by a deductive process. If at all, the two are contradictory in spirit, aims, and methods. The Bhakti Creed if followed consistently makes for Nivritti (निवृत्ति) while Pravritti (प्रवृत्ति) is the one thing required to make men good fighters.

Whatever may be the supposed spiritual merits of a Bhakta, and whatever may be the miraculous powers the superstitious popular mind credits him with, the followers of the Bhakti Creed become in practice tame people, incapable of efficiency in any undertaking. How then can they be good soldiers? Shivaji the Great and his co-adjutors in the political field were not followers of the Bhakti Cult and many of their acts run directly counter to the teachings of the Saints and Prophets. Believers in the unreality of this world cannot take any active interest in the political movement which has for its objective the betterment of their mundane lot. How can we expect those who strive after eternal bliss by repeating the name of God to take part in such a revolting business as war? They preached pity for all animals,[29] they were indifferent to the body and its material needs; peace,[30] forgiveness and mercy were the cardinal principles of their creed. They believed in the doctrine of non-resistance and quiet resignation to the will of God.[31] They taught men to befriend the afflicted, irrespective of their creed.[32] All these teachings may be good from a certain point of view but that is not certainly the politician's viewpoint. Warriors in the cause of their country require altogether a different philosophy of conduct. The Bhakti Creed is the creed of the weak, it is the counsel of despair, it is the weapon of the idler and the ignorant. Both Yoga and Bhakti are useless for practical purposes. We, therefore, hold that the political movement

[29] भूतांची दया हें भांडवल संतां । आपुल्या ममता नाहीं देहीं—तुकाराम

[30] दया, क्षमा, शांति । तेथें देवाची वसती ।

[31] आलिया भोगासी असावें सादर । देवावरी भार घालुनियां ।

[32] जे कां रंजले गांजले । त्यासी म्हणे जो आपुले ॥ तोचि साधु ओळखावा । इ०

was not in any way the expression of the religious movement as Ranade alleges.[33] The religious movement was not in any way the cause of the rise of the political ideal of Swarajya. We know that a similar movement did not produce a political revolution in Northern India. The movement of Independence was caused by the ripe objective conditions of the Marathas in the 16th and 17th centuries. Both these movements are the result of the same material conditions and social environment of those times. The religious revival as seen in the spread of the Bhagwat Dharma is at best one of the minor conditions of the success of the political ideal of the establishment of Swarajya.

For these reasons also it is misleading to identify the Bhakti Movement with the "Maharashtra Dharma" of Ramdas Swami. Rajwade, the great historian of Maharashtra, regards the two creeds (Bhagwat Dharma [34] and Maharashtra Dharma) as entirely different and quite unconnected. Ranade's attempt to connect the two and identify them as one is without any historical basis.

We should not, however, be understood to mean that the religious revival produced no good at all. It gave us a vernacular literature.[35] At the beginning of the 11th century Maharashtra suffered frightfully from Muslim invasion and intellectual darkness settled on the people until the 13th century when literature revived under the Yadav Dynasty. There was no prose literature worthy of the name; the only important literature in Marathi in those days was its poetry. Upon the worship of Vithoba there has been built up in Marathi a literature of great beauty. It may be divided into two portions—Abhangas and Ovis. To the great disgust of the professors of the old Sanskrit learning the Saints and Prophets of Maharashtra addressed the people in their own vernacular. The pioneers of this movement, like Eknath and Tukaram, had to bear the brunt of the Brahmin opposition. Their works were thrown into water. It should not be forgotten that sacred books of the Hindus, the Vedas and Shastras, were not translated, as Bible was, into Marathi. Ramayan, Mahabharat, the Gita, Bhagwat Puran were translated and were made for the first time accessible to all alike and the monopoly of the Brahmins vanished.

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[33] *Rise of the Maratha Power*, p. 143.
[34] *Itihasik Prastawana*, pp. 282-288.
[35] Rajwade fully discusses the Persian element in his introduction to Vol. VIII.

The oldest Marathi poet is Mukundraj but Dnyandev is regarded as " the father of Marathi Poetry ". For three centuries after Dnyandev no writer of any note made his appearance in Maharashtra. Towards the end of the 16th century came Eknath followed by the other renowned poets, Tukaram, Ramdas, Shridhar, Waman Pandit, Moropant, Mukteshwar, Amritaraya, Mahipate and Raghunath Pandit. Shridhar tells us that he wrote to quench the thirst of the weaker sex and to lead them into the path of salvation.

There are two other kinds of poems, the Lavnis or love songs and Powadas or historic Ballads. The Powadas are songs of the wandering bards or Gondhalis and are handed down by memory from one generation to another. They are therefore unwritten bardic poetry.

The Marathi literature of the Bhaktas breathes a breath of equality, fraternity, and of spiritual liberty. The effect of this literature and the teaching of the Saints and Prophets was to quicken the moral consciousness of the Marathas, not their political consciousness. They created the condition which partially ensured the success of the political ideal. The insistence on first principles which were not wholly practised in life, nevertheless left some impression on the minds of people.

The teachings of the Saints and Prophets of Maharashtra, though powerless to make discontent active from the political point, yet contributed to give the Maratha Society that mood of moral exaltedness which was essential to the success of Swarajya. The reaction of the religious revival on the political movement was that it furnished that moral basis (धर्माचें अधिष्ठान) without which Swarajya would have been a mockery. The moral atmosphere created by the Saints made a majority of the Marathas of the 17th century less selfish and perhaps less corrupt. The Bhakti Movement democratised and nationalised the Marathi literature which afforded another influence for national unity just as the National State established by Shivaji the Great was the most powerful of these factors which made Marathas a nation. The devotional songs and moral maxims of these teachers made their way to every home where Marathi language could be read.

Along with Kathas and Puranas the recitations[36] of Shridhar's Pothi made the entire mass of legends and traditions of the race, a common property of all classes of people throughout the land and gave them cultural homogeneity.

The ballads of the Gondhalis are the only class of poetry which has universal currency among the Maratha peasantry. "It appears to have been towards the beginning of the 17th century when the Cult of Amba Bhavani of Tuljapur had spread through the length and breadth of Maharashtra and the reaction against Muslim despotism was gathering and acquiring force, that the Gondhalis, as bards of the goddess, began to rise into an unusual degree of popularity among the Marathas."[37]

"On the whole it may be said that the written (Marathi) poetry, consisting as it does in such very large measure of moral disquisitions and reflections and the praises of this deity or that, is little known to the ryots and the mavalis of Maharashtra and that it would not command their attention or admiration if it were known. In Maharashtra where the immense majority of the peasantry can neither read nor write, it is a mere truism to say that the literature of their country is absolutely unknown to them. It is not to be supposed, however, they are without poetry of their own. With the Marathas the feelings of the commons have taken shape in the ballads which are the genuine embodiment of national enthusiasm."[38] The bards of Maharashtra kept up the spirit of national patriotism and the national bard literature thus helped to spread the new national life throughout the land.

Thus before Shivaji the Great achieved for Maharashtra political unity, a remarkable community of language and life was attained in the 17th century.

One more point. If we do not attribute the inspiration to the Bhagwat Dharma as Ranade insists in his anxiety to find out a proper explanation of the Rise of Maratha Power, do we agree with Rajwade who lays the credit at the door of Ramdas Swami? Was Ramdas the political Guru of Shivaji the Great, the inspirer of the Swarajya movement? Can we say that his teachings brought about the political revolution of which Shivaji the Great was the leader?

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[36] Acworth: *Ballads of the Marathas*, p. 27 Introduction.
[37] Ibid., p. 33 Introduction.
[38] Acworth & Shiligram: *Powadas* 1 & 2.

To all these questions our answer is in the negative. Rajwade says that the twelve hundred Mathas of Ramdas Swami had spread the ideas and work of the Swami throughout Maharashtra and hence it is concluded that Ramdas Swami inspired the political movement. It appears to us that Ramdas Swami himself began as a निवृत्ति Saint but later on the environment reacted on his practical mind and made him an advocate of प्रवृत्ति. The original ideas of Ramdas must have undergone a change in course of time as a result of the political movement then going on around him. If the first meeting between the Great King and Ramdas took place in 1672 (and not in 1649 as several historians hold) then it is clear that the teachings of Ramdas had no influence or part either in the formation of the Political Independence as an ideal or its success during the early period of the life of Shivaji the Great. We have already noticed the several influences which contributed to the formation of that ideal in Shivaji's mind and his resolve had been already made. Ramdas comes on the scene when pioneer labours had begun and advanced considerably. It was this work and the particular methods by which it was successfully carried out by Shivaji the Great and his companions that must have effected the change in Ramdas's idea and philosophy. The credit of initiating the Swarajya movement as also its first recognition as a panacea for the miserable condition of Maharashtra belongs to the creative genius of Shivaji the Great alone. Similarly the particular method by which the political ideal of Swarajya was carried to its success, were evolved by the immensely practical mind of the Maratha Hero. Ramdas seems to have generalised from the existing facts which were before him and which must have helped in the process of the propagation of the ideas of Shivaji the Great to whom alone the ideas originally belong. Thus in our opinion Ramdas's work begins at a later stage and the influence of his teachings and powerful advocacy begin to operate after the death of Shivaji the Great. We think the example of the Great King and his material achievements and the new philosophy of Ramdas together must have sustained the spirit of resistance of the generation that followed the death of both and that fought the War of Independence. Both these must have inspired the Marathas in the days of the War of Independence.

We firmly believe that the religious teachings either those of the Saints of the Bhagwat School or those of Ramdas did not primarily bring about the revolution in the ideas of the Marathas which urged people to embrace the political cause. The urge came powerfully from the material conditions of Maharashtra of those days. Those conditions were political subjection, economic misery and depression and religious persecution. We have already seen those conditions in detail in another chapter. The urge towards establishment of the Hindu State came mainly from economic sources. It was the low economic condition of the masses that made them throw themselves in the arms of Shivaji the Great. If any religious doctrines had any influence, it was in the propagation of the movement which arose among the Marathas because the objective conditions were ripe for such a move. That move was made by the Great King. If it is still maintained that religious movement was at the bottom of the political upheaval, then we say that the religious revival itself was due to the material environment of the Marathas of those times. The people did not join the political movement spontaneously or because of the magnetic personality of Shivaji the Great as one writer remarks but because they were economically harassed. With this harassment as we will make clear presently, came the Mughal invasion of the Deccan. Thus religious precepts of Ramdas and his numerous disciples did not create the ideal of Independence. Hence we do not agree with Rajwade's opinion that "the political revolution of Shivaji's times originated with religious beliefs"[39] and that "Ramdas's Maharashtra Dharma was the cause of it."[40] Of course we agree with him that Bhagwat Dharma did not cause the revolution either.

(4) *The Political and the Economic Conditions of the Marathas*

The Mughal invasion of the Deccan and its ultimate subjugation was the chief external cause of the rise of the Maratha

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[39] Rajwade: *Itihasik Prastavana*, p. 284.

[40] Ibid., p. 287.

State. As we do not believe that the religious renaissance directly caused the movement for the establishment of the Independent Maratha Kingdom under the leadership of the Great King we attach great importance to this circumstance which joined to the other factors satisfactorily explains the phenomenon of the rise of the Maratha State in the 17th century and its re-birth after the death of Shivaji the Great. We must now see how and in what sense the fact of this invasion was connected with the rise of the Maratha Power.

The political and economic condition of the Deccan since its first conquest by Allauddin Khilji to the rise of Shivaji the Great was most depressed like that of any other conquered nation. Political subjection gradually led to what was still worse economic slavery until in the beginning of the 17th century the Marathas were ripe for a political revolution.

We have given elsewhere the details of the conditions of Maharashtra and we do not propose to go over the whole ground again in this chapter. Allauddin Khilji's avowed object was to grind the Hindus and to deprive them of their wealth and property as an insurance against disaffection and rebellion. He therefore took half of the gross produce instead of the traditional one-sixth. Extirpation of idolatry, followed as a religious duty, gave rise to religious persecutions, horrid massacres, and destruction of temples. To the misery proceeding from these causes was added the ravages from terrible famines and pestilences. This miserable condition of the masses continued under the Bahamani regime as it was under the Sultans of Delhi. When the five separate Kingdoms of the Deccan came to be established on the ruins of the Bahamani Kingdom the position of the uppermost classes somewhat improved and violent religious persecution decreased. The reasons for this changed attitude towards the Hindus were: (1) that the Muslim Kings of the Deccan, separated by a great distance from their base beyond the N.-W. Frontier could not get fresh recruits, (2) the fear of the neighbouring Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar, (3) influence of their Hindu wives, (4) influence of the Hindu converts, and (5) the perpetual wars against each other and their neighbours, the Portuguese and the Vijayanagar Empire. As a result the Hindus were employed in the civil and military departments and the revenue accounts came to be kept in Marathi. The

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Marathas thus came to possess great influence at the court of their Muslim rulers and several Maratha families rose to prominence at Ahmednagar, Golkonda and Bijapur as military jahagirdars of the first class. Though religious persecution had comparatively decreased there were frequent sights of cow-killing in the streets, desecration of temples, and forcible conversions of innocent Hindu subjects under the Kings of Bijapur, Golkonda, and Ahmednagar. The persecution and the sectarian bigotry of the Muslim Capital of Bijapur was well known.[41] The condition of the masses of Bijapur was well known. Their condition remained under the different Sultans of the Deccan much the same, says G. Duff. The system of military jahagirs left the peasant at the mercy of the feudal baron and was always open to vexatious exactions. "The revenues under all the Muslim States seem to have been farmed out in small portions in some parts of the country by single villages; where they were not farmed the management appears to have been generally entrusted to Hindu Agency."[42] The Government cared for the fixed percentage of the revenue; so long as it was regularly paid, the condition of the peasants did not matter to them. The miserable lot of the poor cultivator—and it must not be forgotten that for most of the populace agriculture was the only means of livelihood—was made worse by the incessant wars of these kingdoms among themselves or their neighbours. Further their fallen condition was brought home to the Hindus when Vijayanagar, the only visible symbol of the Hindu Independence, was wiped out to the accompaniment of inhuman barbarities. Naturally after the battle of Talicote the minds of the Hindus began to entertain the idea of a deliverer.

Then came the Mughal invasions from Akbar to Aurangzeb and these were the last straw that broke the Deccani camel's neck. These long and desolating wars which began in 1593 and lasted till 1636 must have made life a burden to most of the peasants. The rival armies devastated the whole country either as a defensive or as an offensive military measure with the result that agriculture was utterly ruined. In turn the country was plundered by the Bijapuris, or the Mughals, and on the top of it all came frequent famines accompanied by terrible epidemics which were the inseparable accompaniments of war and swept away large masses of the poor peasantry. For years afterwards there were not enough men to carry on the cultivation. When Dadaji Kondev took over the charge of the Poona district he found it in a totally ruined condition. The work of the licentious soldiery had been finished by robber chiefs. "The Poona and Thana districts at the extreme north-west corner of the Kingdom of Bijapur, therefore, formed a no man's land with none to administer and defend them.[43] Last but not the least was the growth of wild beasts which thinned the population and hampered cultivation. Not only was the peasantry ruined but the petty Deshpandes and Deshmukhs who depended on the revenues, were also involved in the ruin. Excepting the military aristocracy no class was happy." Such was the economic condition of Maharashtra immediately before Shivaji the Great came on the scene.

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[41] The Basatin-i-Salatin gives details of the repressive policy of the Adilshahi Sultans towards the Hindus even in the halcyon days of Sultan Mahomed Adil Shaha.

[42] G. Duff, Vol. I, p. 67.

It is a well-known principle and one now universally accepted by prominent thinkers[44] that historical events are not a result of subjective demands but that they are the consequence of historical necessity, of objective laws; that it is not the subjective will that governs life, but that on the contrary the subjective will is subordinated to and dominated by these objective laws.[45]

"If the mind, the psychological activity, the soul of all living creatures are vitally connected with the form of their bodily structure, with the functioning of their physical organs—in a word, with their material state of being, then the spirit, the soul of society is no less bound up with the material conditions of social life. The social psychology, the social consciousness, the will and the sentiments of society are created by and adapt themselves to the material organs—the methods, the instruments, and the weapons with which society conducts the battle for existence."[46]

Again it is a fundamental principle that "The material productive forces always determine the form of the political order

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[43] Sarcar: *Shivaji and His Times*, p. 23.
[44] Laski is one of them.
[45] Sachs: *Basic Principles of Scientific Socialism*, p. 73.
[46] Ibid., p. 77.

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and institutions which are nothing more than the concrete embodiment of the social sentiments."[47] Not only habits but also customs, manners, laws and political institutions are all bound up with the conditions under which the battle for survival is conducted. Further "The Material productive forces and no other factors make up the objective conditions which give rise to the various historical forms of social Life.".[48]

"The true explanation of the various changes in society and the first or basic causes of all political upheavals must therefore be sought," as Freidrich Engele says in his "Anti-Diirring", "not in the human sentiments of truth and justice but rather in the changes that have taken place in the character of the productive forces and in the method of exchange of the social utilities. The underlying causes of all social phenomena are to be found not in the philosophy but in the economics of every generation."

The economic urge consequent on economic misery was the root cause of the political revolution that took place in Maharashtra in the first half of the 17th century. Rawlinson remarks, "The chief cause of unrest in India is usually economic and it was Shivaji's economic reforms which chiefly recommended him to the people."[49] If this is true then the low material condition of the Marathas was the basic cause of the Swarajya movement. Poverty is the mother of many ills in this world. No wonder, therefore, if the masses must have looked upon Shivaji the Great as their Saviour. Mere religious enthusiasm for the National Religion divorced from the quickened stimulus of economic necessity could not have itself accomplished much.

This argument is further strengthened by the effects of Aurangzeb's Deccan campaign after Shivaji's death on the economic condition of the Marathas. During the eighteen years of the War of Independence the country, already in the throes of an exterminating war for more than a century, was subject to the most awful calamities. Vast armies in marches and counter-marches, foraging parties of Maratha horsemen, disbanded troops of Golkonda and Bijapur and the huge Imperial cortege—all these preyed constantly on the land and left it desolate when they had moved away. They always left behind them "fields, devoid of trees and bare of crops, their places being taken by the bones of men and beasts. Instead of verdure all is blank and barren. The country is so entirely desolated and depopulated that neither fire nor light could be found in the course of a three or four days' journey. In the Deccan provinces from 1702-1704 plague prevailed. In these two years there expired over two millions of souls." [50] Such is the testimony of an eye-witness—such was the lot of the masses. The Emperor destroyed all peaceful pursuits of life. "Trade and revenue collection had long ceased and incessant brigandage by both sides had at last left nothing to be looted." [51] Indeed the economic exhaustion of the Deccan was beyond all comprehension.

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[47] Ibid., p. 78.
[48] Ibid., p. 79.
[49] *Shivaji the Maratha*, p. 95.

The depressed material condition of the Marathas was thus the main cause of the rise of the Maratha State under Shivaji the Great and also of its rebirth after his death. When, therefore, G. Duff says that "The Mughal invasions for the purposes of reducing the kingdoms of Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golkonda had a great influence on the rise of the Marathas," [52] it must be taken in this sense. It is chiefly from their economic effects on the Marathas that the Deccan wars of the Mughal Emperors must be understood to have had great influence on the rise of the Marathas though G. Duff has nowhere made his meaning clear. Thus the predominant political factor of Shivaji's early days, viz., the advance of Mughal armies in the south produced far-reaching economic consequences for the Deccan which ultimately proved the chief cause of the disintegration of the Mughal Empire.

(5) *The Decadence of the Deccan Sultanates and Aurangzeb's Deccan Campaign*

In explaining the rise of the Maratha Empire we must not lose sight of the personal equation, the character of individuals which left their permanent mark on the history of India. Shivaji the Great had to assert the Independence of the Maratha Nation against Bijapur and Golkonda, the remaining two of the five Deccan Kingdoms. The rulers of these States had by this time degenerated and their internal quarrels and weakness helped the rise of Shivaji the Great in the beginning. The warrior-kings of former generations had been followed by effeminate men who preferred the degrading charm and ease of the harem to the worries and anxieties of war. The great conquests of the 17th century were all the achievements of the servants and not of the supreme master. The civilians of the Adil Shahi Power saw also the beginning of its rapid decline and dismemberment. The generals who had conquered kingdoms for their master with their own blood and had been accustomed to giving the law to millions were not the men to obey a child or a female regent or a sluggard on the throne of a far-off capital. "A feudal State cannot," as remarked by Sarkar, "be governed by a fainant King nor by a constitutional prime minister. When the king is no longer a hero, the military Viceroys of the provinces will obey him as little as the major-generals obeyed Richard Cromwell. Only a superman—a Henry V or a Napoleon I—can control the feudal barons and hold together the military type of State such as all the Islamic monarchies in India were."[53] Their kings were mere pleasure-loving puppets; the State was torn by bloody faction-fights for the office of the Vazier; the administration had broken down, law and order had become a thing of the past and the generals were selling themselves to the highest bidder. Such was the anarchy as one historian says, "No man from sardar down to ryat ate his bread for a single day in peace; none from the Sultan down to the pauper slept for a single night in happiness." This circumstance of the want of vigour in the Governments of the Sultans naturally helped the plans of the Maratha leader as he found it easy to form a National State. Sometimes Shivaji the Great would also bring pressure to bear on these Deccan courts from the august Mughal Emperor himself whose designs on them were no longer a secret.

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[50] Manucci: *Storia Do Mogor*, Vol. IV, p. 252.
[51] Sircar: *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. V, p. 18.
[52] G. Duff: *History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, p. 78.

Historians like Elphinstone charge Aurangzeb with political blindness because he destroyed Bijapur and Golkonda first, instead of crushing the Maratha King with the help of these two States.[54] The cardinal point which these historians overlook is that the Deccan Sultans knew very well that since the days of Akbar, the Emperors were always aiming at their final extinction and the annexation of their territories. If they had helped Aurangzeb to crush Sambhaji their turn would, nevertheless, have come next. On the contrary Shivaji the Great and Sambhaji were their protectors in their hour of need as could be seen from Shivaji's timely help to Bijapur against the Mughal general Diler Khan. The interests of the three Deccan monarchs were identical and hence an alliance between them and Aurangzeb merely because both parties were Muslims, was a logical impossibility. On the other hand, Aurangzeb saw that they paid tribute to the Marathas and afforded them asylum when driven from their territory. Bijapur and Golkonda sent help to Sambhaji for that was their last chance to save themselves. Aurangzeb would further get by their conquest a good base for his operations against the Marathas but to leave these potentially hostile kingdoms in his rear or flank would be dangerous for him. There was thus nothing wrong from his point of view in annexing them to the Empire before he threw his whole strength into the fight with the Marathas. He could not have foreseen the extraordinary consequences that followed from his ambitions in the Deccan.

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[53] Vol. IV, p. 14.

[54] *History of India*, p. 634.

Similarly, the argument that he should have wisely left Bijapur and Golkonda independent to police the Deccan against the growing lawlessness of the Marathas does not hold water. If Aurangzeb had not conquered them the Marathas would have. The Marathas proved themselves more than a match for the mighty Emperor, and certainly the two States which had arrived at the last stage of their decline, could not have succeeded in taming Sambhaji and defeating Santaji and Dhanaji, a feat which Aurangzeb himself could not perform. By allowing the resources of these kingdoms to fall in the hands of the Marathas Aurangzeb would have only added to his own difficulties.

(6) *Aurangzeb's Character and the Deccan Campaign*

There can be no doubt that the Deccan policy of the Mughals contributed to the rise of the Maratha Empire. We have already noted how Shahajahan's Deccan campaign upto 1636 produced those objective conditions which turned the thoughts of the Marathas to Swarajya. Now let us see how their policy in the times of Shivaji the Great and during the War of Independence aided the Marathas in their attempt to set up a Hindu Kingdom in the Deccan. The Muslim rulers of Bijapur and Golkonda being in a state of almost constant warfare with the Mughal Emperors of Delhi, says Sullivan,[55] had been forced in self-defence to propitiate as much as possible the Marathas; that was one advantage. In the initial stages Shivaji derived another advantage from the dread of the Mughal invasion in the diplomatic pressure that he brought to bear on the Adilshahi court to get his father released. After the death of the Great King the Deccan campaign seriously began and had it succeeded there would have been no Maratha Empire. He had indeed annexed Bijapur and Golkonda to his Empire. Why did he not similarly conquer the Maratha Kingdom? The measure of his failure, therefore, is the measure of the Maratha success. There were many points in his favour and ordinarily he would have destroyed the infant Maratha State. Whatever the other causes of his failure, his character is a potent cause of the ruin of his dream. Hence his character also is a factor which indirectly contributed its share to the rise of the Maratha Empire.

Some historians blame the Mughals for their ambitions in the Deccan. But they are wise after the event. Having seen that his campaign failed they argue that it ought not to have been undertaken at all. Aurangzeb could not have foreseen, as a matter of fact nobody could have foreseen, that his Deccan campaign was going to be a colossal failure. He had the requisite resources in men and money; he had great generals and he himself possessed the necessary resolution and military ability. To the last he used to direct personally the war operations. He even succeeded in conquering for a brief while the Maratha strongholds and in putting their King to death and capturing his son. Another of their Kings had to quit the territory. Thus for a time it may be said that he had gained his objective. That in the end he failed to conquer the Marathas is another question and is due to the indomitable character of the Maratha Nation but when he set out on his mission he had no means of knowing that his campaign was going to ruin him.

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[55] *Conquerors, Warriors and Statesmen of India*, p. 368.

His character largely contributed to his defeat and we must notice it here as a personal equation in the situation. This was the third advantage for the Marathas.

(a) *His Suspicion of his Generals and Sons*: Want of faith in his generals and sons led to division of command since Aurangzeb invariably sent two generals on his campaigns. His son Shah Alam and Dilir Khan always worked at cross purposes and thus ensured the Mughal failure in the Deccan.[56] Sircar says, "But even if Shah Alam had been made of sterner stuff success would have been beyond his power because his father suspected him of a design to rebel and often saddled him with a refractory lieutenant like Dilir Khan whose open defiance of his authority made the viceregal camp in the Deccan as powerless as a country torn by civil war." Asad Khan and Kambaksh were sent to Jinji when his morbid suspicions about the loyalty of Zulfikar Khan were strengthened. The quarrels of these generals led to the prolongation of the siege and the flight of Raja Ram in safety to Maharashtra as we have already seen. No Mughal general in the Deccan was ever supplied with enough reinforcements though each general repeatedly asked for them. The cause was the Emperor never felt sure of their loyalty and always thought that they might become independent if allowed to grow stronger. His suspicious character admirably prepared for his failure in advance. Aurangzeb always dreaded that his sons would give him the same treatment that he had given to his father, Shahjehan. He, therefore, never trusted them and took elaborate precautions to guard himself against their treachery. But it ruined his chances of success in the war. When Prince Akbar fled to the Deccan to Sambhaji his suspicious nature so magnified the danger that he made a complete change in the Imperial policy in the Deccan. He patched up his peace with the Rajputs and marched southwards on his last grand campaign, intent on crushing both Sambhaji and Akbar and never wanted to relax his efforts till he had succeeded in his policy. Thus his suspicious nature led to important historical results.

(b) *His Bigotry* : His bigotry which, as Sidney Owen [57] remarks, was to some extent assumed by him for his political objects, had a direct bearing on the Deccan campaign. His fanaticism led him into committing two political blunders which adversely affected the fortunes of the Deccan campaign. He reimposed the poll-tax on the Hindus of the North which had been wisely cancelled by the illustrious Emperor, Akbar. He consequently lost the hearty co-operation of his Rajput subjects in the war with the Marathas and that was a serious loss to his military power. The Rajputs would have been of capital value in the Deccan campaign if he had secured their loyalty. Aurangzeb not only collected the poll-tax in the North, but also in the South. The effect of this impolitic measure will be seen from the following account. Stanley Lane-Poole says, "The religious bigotry of the enemy only inflamed his own puritanical zeal and he was impudent enough to insist on the strict levying of his poll-tax on Hindus which had considerably helped the popularity of the Marathas in the very country where it was most important to lay aside Mahomedan prejudices. His first step on arriving in the Deccan was to issue stringent orders for the collection of the hated, Jizya."[58] So much was the resistance to this tax that a tried officer had to be detached with a large force to enforce its payment and he begged the Emperor within three months to appoint someone else to carry on the unpleasant business. Later on he issued a proclamation that no Hindu should ride in a palanquin or mount an Arab horse without special permission. The natural result was that the whole Hindu population threw itself into the arms of their friends, the Marathas.

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[56] Sircar: Vol. IV, p. 11.

[57] *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, pp. 48-49.

Another blunder was the murder of Sambhaji which added considerably to the religious zeal of the Marathas and infuriated them to the highest pitch.

(c) *Perseverance and Autocratic Nature*: Perseverance is a great quality but when a man blindly follows a suicial policy it becomes, as in the case of Aurangzeb, an equally great drawback. Slowly but surely the sense of the coming disaster dawned on the Emperor but he did not abandon the struggle. Even when the hopelessness of the contest forced itself upon him he still persisted like a blind man in his efforts till at last he could not persist any longer in anything. A severe illness at the

[58] *Aurangzeb*, pp. 174-175.

advanced age of eighty-eight conveyed to him the first warning, yet the Emperor insisted on transacting business as usual. It should not be supposed that he had no knowledge of the impending catastrophe. Once or twice he brought himself to negotiate with the enemy but his obstinacy would not allow him to come to terms. The Emperor was not the man to look back when once his hand was set to the plough. His autocratic character had results of another sort. Aurangzeb used to order and supervise every minute detail of administration and warfare personally. This excessive interference with the details kept viceroys and commanders and even "the men on the spot" in far-off districts in perpetual tutelage; their initiative and sense of responsibility were destroyed and they became automatons moved to action only by the master pulling their strings. High-spirited officers found themselves checked, discouraged and driven to sullen inactivity. He became impatient of contradiction and could bear no unpalatable truth. In his latter years he was surrounded by smooth-tongued sycophants and his ministers became no better than clerks passively registering his edicts.[59] He alone conducted every branch of the administration in the most minute details. "He planned campaigns and issued instructions during the progress; drawings of forts were sent for him to fix on the points of attack; his letters embrace measures for keeping open the roads in the Afghan country, for quelling disturbances at Multan and Agra and even for recovering possession of Kandahar; and at the same time there is scarcely a detachment march or a convoy move in the Deccan without some orders from Aurangzeb's own hand."[60] This attention to particulars was not favourable to real progress of business and the highly mobile Marathas reaped all the advantages. If the Marathas looted any district the Emperor arbitrarily ordered his local Governor to make the loss good to the victims. If a Mughal officer resisted the Marathas and was defeated and captured, he had to provide for his own ransom and the Emperor would very often dismiss him for cowardice. Hence it was safer for a Mughal commander to bribe the Marathas than to fight them.

Thus, in many ways Aurangzeb's character influenced in one way or another the Deccan campaign and its failure became a foregone conclusion. His character, therefore, was along with other factors, responsible for the success of the Maratha cause.

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[59] Sircar, Vol. V, pp. 477-478.

[60] Elphinstone: *History of India*, p. 650.

With all that, Sircar remarks, "The life of Aurangzeb was one long tragedy—a story of man battling in vain against an invisible and inexorable fate."[61] The learned author himself explains the mysterious "Fate" as "his character" and "past deeds" in another place.[62] It is thus that the Hindus are confirmed in their faith in Fatalism. Definite traits of Aurangzeb's Character, as we have pointed out above, were the cause at any rate partially of his failure and there were other known causes why he could not win victory under the circumstances and yet it was "Fate". The reason is that historians like Sircar read in History "the justification of Providence, a revelation of great purpose fulfilled in time."[63] We can never encourage such ways of thinking for believers in the doctrine of Fate or Providence are incapable of relying upon their own efforts and can achieve nothing in this world.

(7) *Decay of the Mughal Society*

The decay of the Mughal society helped the rebirth of the Maratha State and later on the Empire in an indirect manner. This factor is of a negative character and a minor one. To all outward appearances the Mughal Empire had attained its highest splendour and power under Aurangzeb but as a matter of fact his long reign produced those conditions of decay which made the task of the Marathas more easy. The appalling economic drain of Aurangzeb's ceaseless warfare in the Deccan produced far-reaching effects. Trade almost ceased in the Deccan during the unhappy quarter of a century; the government became bankrupt and the salaries of the soldiers and the civil officers alike fell into arrears for three years; administrative decline and public disturbances followed in the North; rent collection of the jahagirdars fell off and the nobles became poor. The retrogression of the Mughal Civilization under Aurangzeb was to be seen not only in the decay of Mughal Art but still more in the low intellectual type of the new generation. Towards the end of the 17th century the older nobility nourished on the manly traditions of Akbar and Shahjehan gradually made room for a lesser type of noblemen, incapable of undertaking any responsible work and seeking personal advancement by flattery. Aurangzeb had killed initiative out of them and his prolonged life dwarfed the younger generation. The culture of the aristocracy decayed noticeably, with the lack of leisure and amid the continuous camp-life in the South. They copied bigotry and narrowness of outlook from Aurangzeb and vice and sloth from the later Mughals. Their moral degeneration was such that it produced the greatest mischief. Education of their sons was neglected and they became familiar with vice from what they saw and heard in the harem. All classes alike were sunk in the densest superstition and from the ranks of the nobility, proud spirit and majestic dignity which were their strong points before were now totally absent. Corruption of every sort crept into the administrative departments. Under such conditions naturally no able minister or general could be born. Nizam-ul-mulk was the only capable man that the Mughal society produced under the later Mughals.

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[61] *History of Aurangzeb,* Vol. V, p. 1.
[62] Ibid., p. 3.
[63] Ibid., p. 495.

The soldiers grew weary of the endless and futile war and the morale of the army was completely broken. "A generation of imperialists grew up in the Deccan who had never seen a city or house of brick or stone but passed all their lives in tents, marching from one encampment to another."[64] The deterioration of the character of the Emperors caused a similar decline in the character of the nobility. Without any independence of thought or action, the heirs to the throne of Delhi grew up utterly helpless and dependent upon others. Their intellect was dulled and they took pleasure in the company of harem women, buffoons, and flatterers. The later Emperors had not even the wisdom to choose a right man as Wazir. "He was easily led away by the whispers of eunuchs and flatterers and issued orders for the dismissals of old ministers and provincial Governors in the vain hope of getting more money or greater servility from their successors. Thus the nobles found that career was not open to talent, that loyal and useful service was no security against capricious dismissal and degradation, that their property and

[64] Sircar: *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. IV, p. 451.

family honour were not always safe in such a court."[65] Under these circumstances the only course of personal safety and advancement was for them to establish provincial independent dynasties of their own.

This condition of the Mughal society was unfavourable to discipline and to military spirit and during the Deccan campaign both had been palpably impaired. Elphinstone[66] aptly remarks, "The nobles had far advanced towards the sloth and effeminacy for which they have since been noted and even those who retained their energy were unsuited to active service. They all went into the field in coats of wadding, that would resist a sword, and over that chain or plate armour; and were mounted on large and showy horses with hugh saddles and ample housings of cloth or velvet from which many streamers of different coloured satin and often pairs of the bushy ox-tails of Tibet, hung down on each side. The horses' neck and all the harness were loaded with chains, bells and ornaments of the precious metals; and as each soldier imitated his superior, so far as his means would admit, they formed a cavalry fitted to prance in a procession and not ill-adapted to a charge in a pitched battle, but not capable of any long exertion and still less of any continuance of fatigue and hardship." To this individual inefficiency was added a total relaxation of discipline. Aurangzeb's boasted vigilance could not prevent gross abuses creeping into the military department. The degrading military character of the officers completed the ruin of the Grand Army. They could neither be got to keep watch nor to remain alert on picket duty. "The very rank and file grumbled if their tents were not furnished as comfortably as in quarters at Agra and their requirements attracted an immense crowd of camp followers twenty times as numerous as the effective strength."[67] An eyewitness, Dr. Gemelli Careri, describes the Imperial camp at Golgala in 1695 as enormous, the royal tents alone occupying a circuit of three miles. The Mughals thus were not the same hardy warriors that Babar led into Hindustan. The effeminacy of the soldiers was encouraged by the dilatory tactics of their selfish generals. They held treasonable parleys with the enemy and purposely acted languidly so as to hoodwink their master while maintaining a secret understanding with Shivaji the Great and later with Sambhaji and accepting bribes from them. The Hindu officers in Mughal pay secretly fraternised with the Deccani Champions of Hinduism.

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[65] Irvine: *Later Mughals*, Vol. II, p. 312.
[66] *History of India*, p. 643.
[67] Lanepoole: *Aurangzeb*, p. 191.

(8) *Training of the Marathas under the Deccan Sultanates*

The training in military art and civil government that the Marathas continued to receive in the service of the three Deccan Kingdoms was of good use to them in their attempt to found their own National State. Long ago they had been taught by Malik Amber the value of guerilla tactics for which they, as light cavalry, possessed special aptitude. Then under Bijapur and Golkonda the Maratha military nobles and Brahmin diplomats and revenue officers got enough opportunities to exercise their capacities and thus to keep alive both the military and civil traditions. Of course the Maratha war-lords under Bijapur and Golkonda opposed Shivaji the Great and deprived him and the Maratha cause of the support of their powerful military training but the officers trained under Shahaji were of great help to the Maratha State in the successful working of the civil departments. The predominant position to which the Marathas had attained in the courts of Bijapur and Golkonda gave them the necessary preliminary confidence in their ability to conduct government and military campaigns and provided them with the material resources necessary for the coming enterprise.

(9) *Shivaji the Great and his Loyal Coadjutors*

Shivaji the Great possessed every quality to enable him to steer the small political ship of Maharashtra in those stormy times safely to port. Under his able direction nothing went wrong and all his military and civil genius was utilised towards one object to make the Marathas, a Nation. The fragments of Maratha power had been scattered here and there which perhaps would never have been united by a common bond but for his steady efforts.

As the leader of a mass movement his art of conciliating men and enlisting popular sympathy was of the highest value in his difficult enterprise. Shivaji the Great captivated the hearts of his people by the charm of his personal magnetism. No one ever turned a traitor to the cause or proved disloyal to him. His versatile genius, amazing energy and decision, sleepless vigilance, wonderful endurance, remarkable strength, activity, and daring in action—all these qualities which would have raised him to distinction in any age were the glory and admiration of his race. His fiery spirit fanned into a flame the latent energy and ambition of the Marathas. He possessed in an eminent degree the faculty of discerning and appreciating merit and chose his agents from the ablest men in the land. He was generous in rewards, gave equal justice to all, took care of the dependents of the fallen soldiers but ruled his subjects with a firm hand and was a strict disciplinarian. Mild and merciful and never wantonly cruel, he scorned to retaliate on the Muslims the bigoted persecution which they had inflicted on the followers of his faith.

Possessing organising ability of a high order, and trusting and trusted by his companions, he was adored, like all great generals, by his troops who would follow him through thick and thin. A sincerely religious man and devoted to his parents, especially to his mother, he respected women, mosques, and non-combatants, never carried on useless slaughter after a battle and always dismissed with honour captured officers and men.

On the field of battle, he never thought of either sparing himself or remaining an idle spectator in comparative security but sword in hand personally led his hosts to the attack and by his own dazzling example encouraged his men to perform impossible feats of courage and valour. His personal industry was a perennial inspiration to his officers. His anxiety for the welfare of his subjects, benevolence in public administration, religious enthusiasm, simplicity of dress and habits, purity of private life, originality, love of independence—these among other notable traits of his character ensured the success of the movement he led.

Even the towering genius of Shivaji the Great could not have achieved the big success for the movement of liberation without the loyal and intelligent co-operation of his selfless fellow-workers. Nearly hundred persons—men like Moro Pingle, Abaji Sondev, Annaji Datto, Niraji Raoji, Murar Baji, Baji Prabhu, Balaji Avaji Chitnis, Yesaji Kank, Tanaji Malusare, Baji Fasalkar, Sambhaji Kawji, Netaji Palkar, Prataprao Gujar, Firangoji Narsala, Suryaji Malusare, Hiroji Farjand—devoted their time to their country's cause without any expectation of reward and their sacrifice presented a glaring contrast to the selfishness of later generations, who would be moved to serve their country only if the inducement of a Jahagir was forthcoming. Shivaji the Great was *primus in pares* and it is but proper that these also should share the glory with their leader for they also contributed their services to found the Maratha Empire.

(10) *Maratha Methods—" Maharashtra Dharma "*

The causes of the rise of the Maratha Empire are many, some of which are minor while others are of chief importance. The particular physical environment, the national characteristics, the external circumstances, personal equations and above all the internal social development—all these have their place in an investigation like this. But we attach comparatively greater importance to internal social forces. In their strong practical sense and their ability to evolve a vigorous philosophy of social conduct, the Maratha race showed their superiority to other Indian social groups, the Rajputs included, which made it the first nation to overthrow the Muslim domination. The secret of their success lies in the fact that they used methods of war which exactly suited their weak position as a subject nation. Taught by bitter experience the disadvantages of a slave country, Shivaji the Great refused to be influenced by moral niceties in the selection of his methods. Attainment of political Independence was to him of such supreme importance that he preferred success of his movement to the empty applause of the moralists. So long as he could achieve his just goal he did not bother himself much as to the criticism of his methods. He would use any and every means but secure freedom from foreign domination to his country. As a national leader it was his business to formulate the national ideal and adopt tactics having his sole eye on his objective. So long as his methods are successful, they cannot be wrong. If his conduct contravenes certain received moral maxims, it is not the fault of his conduct, the maxims are wrong and must be amended quickly in the light of the Great King's example. If the flabby moralist has received a few shocks and his tin gods—the moral precepts—which he had hugged to his bosom so long, have been deposed, so much the better for him. For he has been saved from the coils he was weaving round his soul, he was fast becoming a weakling, and would have some day met with a worse disaster—but now he has been brought face to face with realities and must think out his philosophy anew. In seeing his moral ideals shattered at a stroke the arm-chair philosopher may have to put up with a little mental discomfort but it may be the better for it. Man is not made for abstract philosophy, but philosophy is made for Man and if a particular moral maxim is found violated by the Great King, such violation proceeds either from the badness of the moral principle which was perhaps a generalisation from insufficient experience or its wrong application. Moral principles cannot dictate particular social conduct as the social conduct must make the moral law. You cannot apply moral rules of private conduct to public conduct, unless you are prepared to find that the past and present conduct of nations universally differs from the accepted moral canons. Thus all the European nations, whether in their relations with other Christian nations or with nations professing other faiths have always systematically violated Christian principles. It was by entirely ignoring moral precepts that Empires have been built, nations have been enslaved and thus great material advantages have been secured by nations for themselves. If there was any good example of the end justifying the means it was that of Shivaji the Great. Except where dire necessity forced him to violate moral canons he was always a great moral man. In his case alone necessity was not the plea of an immoral man. He was always moved by high motives. Hence his methods could not be in the wrong.

It was necessary for him to make a few examples of those feudal barons who far from uniting with their countrymen in the cause of Swarajya opposed him bitterly in the interest of the enemy. Therefore the Mores of Jawli and the Ghorpades of Mudhol were made to pay the price of their treachery with their lives. The murder of Afzal Khan was a defensive act. It was highly immoral on the part of Shahista Khan to try to crush him with an overwhelming force and hence Shivaji the Great had to resort in self-defence to what arm-chair moralists may call immoral statagem. Shivaji's methods were eminently successful and that is all.

In war the Great King perfected the technique of Guerilla warfare or गनिमी कावा the last resort of a subject nation, the weaker military State. He was the past master in the art of predatory warfare. He used to deliver lightning and furious attacks on masses of the enemy forces. The demoralised forces were then hotly pursued, their camps were pillaged and destroyed, their booty was taken, their supplies were cut off, and they were harassed from all sides. The success of his method depended on rapidity, enterprise, energy, courage, perseverance in each soldier; bravery and discipline in the whole army; and coolness, vigour and resourcefulness in the General. All these requisites Shivaji the Great possessed to an extraordinary degree and naturally his success was assured. Repeated blows were sure to destroy the morale of the enemy army. In case it proved stronger he would avoid war and order his army to disperse in all directions with instructions to unite in a previously agreed and known place.

As Elphinstone[68] remarks, "The plan best adapted to them was, to bend before a blow, to offer nothing tangible for the enemy to attack and to return to the charge with undiminished vigour whenever it suited them to take the part of assailants." The author further says, "The Marathas were little active men accustomed to hard work and hard fare. The usual food was a cake of millet with perhaps an onion; their dress a small turban, tight breeches covering their thighs and a scarf or sash rolled round their middle. When their body was not bare it was covered with a light cotton tunic. Their arms were a sword and a matchlock but oftener a bamboo spear thirteen or fourteen feet long, the national weapon which they used with extraordinary skill. Their horses were those of their own country, small, strong, and active, capable of enduring great fatigue and taught to bound forward or stop or to wheel round when at full speed on the slight pressure from the rider's leg. They had a pad for saddle with a blanket folded over it. When stationary, few except the chiefs had tents; and on their inroads, each man slept on the ground, with his spear struck by him and his bridle tied to his arm ready to leap on horse-back on the slightest alarm of the approach of the enemy."[69] They never risked an engagement in the open field unless their numbers made victory a certainty. "When the heavy Mughal cavalry attacked them the hardy little warriors, mounted on wiry steeds as inured to fatigue as themselves and splendidly broken in for their tactics would instantly scatter in all directions and observe the enemy from a neighbouring hill or wood, ready to cut off solitary horseman or surprise small parties in ambush; and then if the pursuers gave up the useless chase, in a moment the Marathas were upon them, hanging on their flanks despatching stragglers and firing at close quarters into the unwieldly mass."[70] Even a victory against such a highly mobile army was useless.

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[68] *History of India*, p. 641.

"A defeat to the Marathas was like a blow given to water, which offers no resistance to the stroke and retains no impression of its effect. But a defeat to the Mughals was attended with loss and humiliation; and even their partial success did not stop the waste of their resources and embarrassment of the finances of their government which every day increased their difficulties and undermined their strength.[71]

Thus was the Great King always victorious against his enemy. His successors faithfully followed these tactics in the Glorious War of Independence against Aurangzeb's Grand Army and finally wore it out. These tactics were suited to the position of the Marathas as a nation at that time possessing slender military resources.

"The military history of any country is largely determined by its Topography".[72] This fact explains why Shivaji the Great used to attach the highest importance to his forts. He had fully realised the value of forts in imposing delay on the enemy, in safeguarding his own depots of supply, in threatening the advance of a hostile army and in affording a refuge to his own army when expecting succour or retreating before a superior enemy force.[73]

Because of the strategical retreats of his army a charge of cowardice has sometimes been brought against Shivaji the Great. But these worthy critics forget that his sole object was to gain victory for his cause. He would have uselessly and seriously frittered away his military strength if he had followed the Rajput practice of killing their women and rushing on the enemy with their swords in hand only to be killed by superior numbers. The Rajput's one anxiety was not to show his back to the enemy as he interpreted the duties of a Kshatriya in a narrow way. The Marathas were the best Kshatriyas because on the whole they defeated their enemies more easily and better protected their weaker brethren. To expect them to observe mere points of honour against superior enemy was to ask them to fail in their essential duty of the protection of their Dharma and their fellow-men. The means are immaterial so long as the main aim is not lost sight of and is achieved. He also is a good Kshatriya who knows when to retreat and when to risk his life for the success of his cause like Tanaji Malusare. Certainly the Great Captain and his brave soldiers were not anxious to save their skins. They were not afraid to die, and if they sometimes attempted to live, they lived only for the cause. Verily those Marathas were as brave, courageous, and dangerous soldiers, as the Spartans of the Ancient Greece. Then let us examine his system of plundering raids (मुलूखगिरी) and exacting chowth. It was a part of the guerilla tactics (गनिमी कावा) and his policy certainly was to make war pay for war.

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[69] Ibid., p. 644.
[70] Stanely Lanepoole: *Aurangzeb,* pp. 172-173.
[71] Elphinstone: *History of India,* p. 648.
[72] Hilaire Belloc: *Warfare in England,* p. 1.
[73] Ibid., p. 17.

There has been some difference of opinion about its character and its origin had been commonly attributed to Shivaji the Great. Sen,[74] however, says that the idea of exacting a regular contribution from his wealthy enemies to replenish his war chest was suggested to the quick mind of the Great King by the practice prevailing in the Portuguese province of the North.

Ranade says the Marathas undertook to protect the chowth-paying countries from external aggression and remarks, "This was the original idea as worked out by Shivaji and it was this same idea which in the Marquis of Wellesley's hand bore such fruit a hundred and twenty-five years late."[75] Thus Ranade holds that the policy of exacting chowth was the same as the one underlying the subsidiary alliances of Lord Wellesley. Sircar remarks, "The chowth was only a means of buying off one robber and not a subsidiary system for the maintenance of peace and order against all enemies. The lands subject to the chowth cannot therefore be rightly called spheres of influence." [76] Thus Sircar regards it as blackmail. Sen looks upon chowth as nothing but a military contribution paid by the defenceless subjects of enemy kingdoms and territories for the protection of their lives and property from the invading Maratha army which held them completely at its mercy.[77] Our opinion is that chowth, to which Sardeshmukhi and Ghasdana came subsequently to be added under Shahu, was neither exactly blackmail nor subsidiary alliance. It was not blackmail of a mere robber because the ideas of protection from foreign enemies, and some hereditary right were always behind these demands giving them some sort of legal sanction. It was not the subsidiary alliance of Wellesley because the powers paying chowth were not controlled in their foreign relations. Shivaji the Great always asserted his right to these taxes as hereditary Deshmukh and promised to keep the army for the Imperial service in return for its grant. He also entered into alliances with Bijapur and Golkonda on their promising to pay these taxes. If his claim (to Sardeshmukhi) has been acknowledged or if he had succeeded in obtaining a firman in its support there would have been no legal flaw whatever in his demand and this Sen himself admits.[78] This applies to the claim of chowth also. Later on the Emperor admitted the Maratha claim to these rights when Shahu came to the throne. The Marathas made themselves responsible for the maintenance of peace and order and undertook to serve the Viceroy with 15,000 men and to pay a Peshkash. Thus the original idea of Shivaji the Great was carried out. The Maratha statesmen had also the idea of a subsidiary alliance as Sen [79] admits and as is proved by Nana Saheb's [80] arrangement with the Raja of Bundi and the chief of Bhandawar. As a result of the grant of Chowth and Sardeshmukhi by the Emperor in 1719 "for a time the calamities of war and its attendant famine which had vexed Dekkan for a long series of years subsided and the people began to taste repose." [81] Thus when the right was conceded the people at least got respite from the Maratha raids. Whatever the irregularities in carrying out the conditions, the later Peshwas seem to have used these rights to work the system in some way as a subsidiary alliance. The irregularities in practice were due to historical circumstances but the English must have improved upon the original pattern. The English subsidiary alliance was the extension of the principle of chowth of the Marathas. In both cases the systems achieved the object for which they were meant—they helped to bring in their train the respective Empires. Both systems indicate the prevailing position of their military strength. The English were militarily stronger and hence they could force their alliance in a regular manner and in a more clear-cut legal form. While the Marathas, who were not militarily so strong in the beginning and had never the habit of thinking clearly, did not bother themselves about legal aspects and hence attained the same object in an irregular manner. In the hands of the Marathas the system had three phases: (1) Under Shivaji the Great it had to be exacted by force of arms and without the Imperial Firman; (2) under Shahu it had a Firman behind it and had sometimes to be collected by force; and (3) under the later Peshwas it became an alliance. Had Aurangzeb granted the right at once perhaps the irregularities might have been avoided but as it was refused Shivaji the Great was forced to resort to his method of Mulukhgiri to collect it. When the Marathas were in a position to enforce their right, it would have been better if they had annexed the territory at once. But that was prevented by Shahu's sentimental respect for the Emperor. The English system, however, was not more moral because it was more legal. At bottom both were based on superior force and both were meant to serve selfish ends. The policy of Shivaji the Great in this respect as in the case of the raids was governed by the necessity of the State. He had to maintain a big army to defend his newly founded Kingdom against the attacks of powerful enemies, to build many forts and had to fit out a navy and he had to find finance for them. His revenues were limited and therefore insufficient for the purpose. He had a clear idea about

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[74] *Military System of the Marathas*, pp. 28-37. Refer also to the same author's *Administrative System of the Marathas*, Footnote pp. 114-115.

[75] *Rise of the Maratha Power*, pp. 223-225.

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[76] *Shivaji and His Times*, pp. 407-408.

[77] *Military System of the Marathas*, p. 41; and *Administrative System of the Marathas*, pp. 115-116.

[78] *Administrative System of the Marathas*, p. 112.

[79] *Administrative System of the Marathas*, p. 116.

[80] Peshwa's Diaries, Vol. III, p. 21 & Vol. II, pp. 286-292.

[81] Scott: *History of the Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 152.

the character of his policy and made his position quite clear to the Governor of Surat. He said that he had been forced to keep a large army by the Emperor and his subjects must pay for it. It was not his business either to protect the enemy subjects or to foster trade and commerce in an enemy country. It was the Emperor's own business. Shivaji the Great looked to these questions, not from the legal or moral point of view but from the point of view of its military potency to cripple the enemy resources and to increase his own. In demanding Chowth and exacting it when not granted, he did his primary duty, as the liberator of his country and its military leader, of taking advantage of the weak points of the enemy. From the higher ethical point of view he was doing nothing wrong. A subject nation has its own code of morality. Shivaji the Great, never immoral in any sense in his private conduct and even in the narrow sense of our idle moralists, was indeed not a Mahmud of Gazni. He had made humane campaign regulations.

The charge of freebooting coming from interested sources or from stupid moralists, therefore, cannot hold water. Every other nation has taken recourse to similar measures in the past, the whole world in spite of its culture and civilization does the same thing in the present and will continue to do the same in future so long as there are either wars or subject nations. Only the other nations are not actuated by equally high motives. Shivaji's National State was in the beginning weak militarily and he was asserting the birth right of his Nation to live independently.

The ancient Romans had set no limits to their rapacity while extending their Empire. "Bellum alit bellum" (war must pay for war) was their favourite motto. Even in the 19th century, as Sen[82] has pointed out, General Sherman's campaign in 1865 had been accompanied by the systematic pillage of the territories he marched through. Requisition is only a modern variation of contribution but it is also sanctioned by the most modern laws of war and was practised, though unwillingly, by Washington on his unwilling fellow-citizens. Shivaji the Great on the other hand levied the contribution from the enemy subjects. Modern nations in this respect must be regarded as the greatest robber States. They first conquer other nations' territories, annex them to their own and suck them dry. They cannot claim to be more moral because they try to pillage the subject people through legal machinery of their own making and because such attempts at hoodwinking the public are accompanied by high sounding phrases. The Marathas were more manly and direct in their methods; modern nations use diplomatic ways and give their spoliation such names as "taxes", "war loans", "indemnities", "salaries and pensions", etc. Who will regard modern nations as more ethical in their methods because perforce they have learnt to disguise their real aims? Are they not more insidious and systematic in the robberies that they practise? Shivaji the Great in his days had no such things as war loans or national debts, but was highly moral in his conduct in the best sense of the term and must be reckoned a paragon of contemporary morality.

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[82] *Administrative System of the Marathas*, p. 116.

The philosophy of conduct which was practised by Shivaji the Great, was propagated by Ramdas, by giving it a definite expression and we can get an idea of it from his teachings.

Ramdas Swami was the only philosopher Maharashtra produced who directly helped the Maratha society by his teaching to fight for its independence. The effect of Shivaji's actual achievements and of Ramdas's teachings was clearly seen in the next generation. This philosophy of Pravritti (प्रवृत्ति) can be collectively styled as "Marathaism" and the Marathas deserve credit for having shown independence of thought and action in practising it. They were the first Hindus to get out of the clutches of the prevailing philosophy of despair and weakness. Shivaji the Great and his followers deserve our thanks and gratitude for having shown courage and acuteness of intellect in thus rising superior to their Hindu traditions which would never have otherwise encouraged them to shake off their slavery.

Let us now see what Ramdas[83] has to teach. In general he asked people to cast off idleness and to take pains and work assiduously for any undertaking. He deprecates the habit of idleness and urges repeatedly the necessity of action or efforts in any cause.

म्हणोन आळस सोडावा । यत्न सापेक्षें जोडावा

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[83] All these quotations have been taken from *Samarth Sanjivini* by L. R. Pangarkar.

यत्नाचा लोक भाग्याचा । यत्नेंविण दरिद्रता
उमजला लोक तो धाला । उमजेना तो हपापला
कष्टेंविण फळ नाहीं । कष्टेंविण राज्य नाहीं
केल्याविण होत नाहीं । साध्य कांहीं ॥
आळसें काम नासतें । हें तों प्रत्ययास येतें
कष्टाकडे चुकावितें । हीन जन ॥

* * *

One cannot get any good result or there can be no kingdom without adequate efforts. He describes the dire economic misery of the people who did not know what to do under the circumstances. They could not even beg because begging was not in those days profitable. Poverty was universal.

पदार्थ तितुका गेला । नुस्ता देशची उरला
येणें करितां बहुतांला । संकट आलें ॥
माणसा खावया अन्न नाहीं । आंथरुण पांघरुण तेंहि नाहीं
घर कराया सामग्री नाहीं । काय करिती ॥
तथापि मार्गचि चालेना । भिक्षा मागतां मिळेना
अवघे भिकारीच, जना । काय म्हणावें ॥

He attributes this misery to their own degeneration, but holds out hope of better days, advises unity, and urges them to make attempts to better their lot.

ब्राह्मण बुद्धीपासून चेवले । आचारापासून भ्रष्टले
गुरुत्व सांडून जालें । शिष्य शिष्यांचे ॥
राज्य नेलें म्लेंच्छक्षेत्रीं । गुरुत्व नेलें कुपात्रीं

He advises a leader to pass much of his time in solitude that he should be able to take stock quietly of the public affairs and decide upon his measures.

एकांत सेवावा । तेणें तजविजा कळती
अखंड चाळणा निघती

He should not rely upon others for the execution of important work; for that he should depend upon his own efforts; he should always direct the policy himself but may get minor work done by others. He should not give out secrets, he should find out from his knowledge who are bad persons and who are good but the names of wicked ones must not be given out. He should follow a policy of "Tit for Tat".

जो दुसऱ्यावरी विश्वासला । त्याचा कार्यभाग बुडाला
मुख्य सूत्र हातीं घ्यावें । करणें तें लोकांकरवीं करवावें
दुर्जन प्राणी समजावे । परी ते प्रगट न करावे
जैशास तैसा भेटे । तेव्हां मज्यालसीं थाटे
धटासी आणावा धट । उद्धटासी पाहिजे उद्धट

Describing the duties of a good king, Ramdas remarks among other things that he should know a person first before he entrusts any work to his care. An incompetent fellow should never be appointed to do any work. A traitor should be killed but after ascertaining the truth by making inquiries. He must not be averse to take infinite pains, and must not lose courage in a crisis. The king himself should not risk his life in battle but should create many leaders by training.

आधीं मनुष्य ओळखावे । योग्य पाहोनी काम सांगावें
निकामी तरी ठेवणें । एकीकडे ॥
अमर्याद फितवेखोर । यांचा करावा संव्हार
शोधिला पाहिजे विचार । यथातथ्य ॥
उपाधीस जो कंटाळला । तो भाग्यापासूनि चेवला
समयीं धीर सांडिला । तोही खोटा ॥
संकटीं कंटाळो नये । करावे अत्यंत उपाय
तरी मग पाहतां काय । उणें आहे ॥
धुरेनें युद्धासी जाणें । अैसीं नव्हेत तीं राजकारणें
धुराच करून सोडणें । किती एक

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उद्दंड मुंडें असावीं । सर्वही एक न करावीं
वेगळालीं कामें घ्यावीं । सावधपणें ॥

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रायानीं करावे राजधर्म । क्षत्रीं करावे क्षात्रधर्म

* * *

About the duties of Kshatriyas he says that a man afraid to die should not be a Kshatriya. He should prefer to die on the battlefield while killing his enemy. A servant, he says, should be loyal.

जयास जिवाचें वाटे भय । तेणें क्षात्र कर्म करूं नये
कांहीं तरी करून उपायें । पोट भरावें ॥

मारितां मारितां मरावें । तेणें गतीस पावावें
फिरोन येतां भोगावें । महद्भाग्य ॥
मराठा तितुका मेळवावा । आपुला महाराष्ट्र धर्म वाढवावा
ये विषयीं न करितां तकवा । पूर्वज हांसती ॥
मरणहांक तो चुकेना । देह वांचवितां वांचेना
सेवक विश्वास दाविती । आणि वैरियांकडे मिळोनी जाती
तया चांडाळासी गती । कोठेंचि नाहीं ॥

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In another place he says that a leader should have trust in none. He should think and act for himself. He should not be afraid of labour nor fail in attempts. He should persevere in a cause, unmindful of the troubles he may have to take. He should never lose heart. He should avoid extremes and act according to circumstances. He should exercise caution against being surprised by the enemy.

Finally he exhorts King Sambhaji and through him the whole of Maharashtra in the following beautiful lines:

"Be always on your guard and never be off your guard. Control your temper and be tender and kind towards others. Let all of you live in unity. Seek out your Muslim enemies and remove them from your path. Deal with each difficulty as it arises. Keep your anger under control, or at least do not betray it in the presence of others. Make the people one; fill their minds with the single thought of resisting the Mlencha. Guard what you already have; add to it by your own exertion and so extend on all sides the Kingdom of Maharashtra, Bear King Shivaji in mind and deem life a worthless trifle."

कोणाचा भरवसा न धरावा । आपुला आपण विचार करावा
तकवा उदंड धरावा । कोणी एकविषयीं ॥
देहे दुःखें कदरों नये । उदंडचि करावे उपाय
एकांती चाळणा करावी । धारणा उदंड धरावी
नाना विचारणा करावी । अरि मित्रांची ॥
प्रयत्नीं चुकों नये । सुखवासी कामा नये
धुरेनें धीर सोडूं नये । मुख्य प्रसंग चुकों नये
उद्योग रहित कामा नये । पशु जैसे ॥
उपाधीस कंटाळला । विचाराचा आळस आला
म्हणजे जाणावा चेवला । बुद्धिपासूनी ॥

अति सर्वत्र वर्जावें । प्रसंग पाहोनी चालावें
हलनिग्रहीं न पडावें । विवेकी पुरुषें ॥
म्लेंच्छ दुर्जन उदंड । बहुतां दिवसाचें वंड
या कारणें अखंड । सावधान असावें ॥
अखंड सावधान असावें । दुश्चित कदापि नसावें
तजविजा करित बसावें । एकांत स्थळीं ॥
कांहीं उग्रस्थिती सांडावी । कांहीं सौम्यता धरावी
सकळ लोक एक करावे । गलीम निपटून काढावे
समय प्रसंग ओळखावा । राग निपटून काढावा
आला तरी कळो नेदावा । जनांमध्यें ॥
बहुत लोक मिळवावे । अेक विचारें भरावे
कष्ट करोन घसरावें । म्लेच्छांवरी ॥
आहे तितुकें जतन करावें । पुढें आणिक मिळवावें
महाराष्ट्र राज्य करावें । जिकडे तिकडे ॥
शिवरायासी आठवावें । जिवित तृणवत् मानावें

* * *

But the first duty that he enjoins on all is "Unite every Maratha and increase our Maharashtra Dharma"—

मराठा तितुका मेळवावा । आपुला महाराष्ट्रधर्म वाढवावा

There is a good deal of difference of opinion as to what Ramdas meant by MAHARASHTRA DHARMA. What is the meaning of Maharashtra Dharma? Rajwade[84] interprets Maharashtra Dharma so as to include under it (1) Hindu Dharma, (2) Establishment of religion, (3) Protection of cows and Brahmins, (4) Establishment of Swarajya, (5) Unity, (6) Leadership. The establishment of Swarajya means also according to this high authority the punishment of the enemy. In case the enemy is strong Maharashtra Dharma enjoins that the guerilla tactics should be used. Considering the spirit of Ramdas's teachings, Rajwade's interpretation is appreciably correct.

Thus it will be seen that the spirit of Maharashtra was entirely different from that of the other "mild Hindus" of the time. "Marathaism" was indeed a militant philosophy of conduct and it made the contemporary Maratha society a superior Social Organisation. The range of knowledge of the Hindus of those days was low but within its narrow limits reason had a free play in the Maratha society only. Being without Purdah, the Maratha women enjoyed a better status in their social life; the Marathas were remarkably untouched by intellectual slavery and therefore possessed a greater spirit of independence in every walk of life. A Maratha would ordinarily break but would never bend. The Marathas had the capacity to evolve a social ideal, " Maharashtra Dharma ", and had the necessary virile manhood to bring it into operation. They were, as a social group, more progressive than the Muslims as well as any other Hindu social group of those times. It is, therefore, not surprising that they were able to establish the Maratha State in the teeth of the opposition from the Mughal Emperor and to expand it in course of time into a mighty Empire.

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[84] *Itihasik Prastavana*, p. 287 & pp. 31-34.

We have so far discussed the causes of the rise of the Maratha Empire; in the next chapter we shall deal with the causes of its fall.

CHAPTER IX

THE CAUSES OF THE DOWNFALL OF THE MARATHA EMPIRE

To a student of Indian History there is perhaps no question of greater importance than the sudden and unexpected fall of the apparently strong Maratha Empire. Widest in its extent at the time of its downfall, unlimited in its man-power and its material resources, our Empire was at its zenith when a foreign nation pricked the bubble and with a small army and a campaign of only fifteen weeks, destroyed it once for all. If the Marathas were strong enough to be masters of India, how were they so easily conquered by the English nation despite the several initial difficulties to which that nation, as foreigners, was subject? In what respect were they superior to our forefathers? Wherein lay the weakness of our nation? To what circumstances was to be attributed the failure of the Marathas to defend themselves successfully against the English? Historians have attempted to furnish answers to these questions and sometimes altogether wrong explanations have been offered. How do we look at the problem? In our opinion the causes of the downfall of the Maratha Empire are, in their final analysis, due to the serious defects of the Maratha Society of the 19th century and its environment as compared to the corresponding English Society. All other causes so far given, are either misleading or in the nature of results of one ultimate cause, the prime cause—the backward social organisation of the Hindus. We shall attempt to prove this in the present chapter and towards that end we shall begin by examining the views of other writers on this topic. If our enquiry is to lead to any useful purpose we must not stop short at giving only surface causes but we must pursue the subject to its logical conclusion. Then and then only we would be in a position to attain that correct perspective which is the aim of all historical investigation.

I. *Absence of Well-drilled Army and Modern Guns and Munitions*

This is one of the two chief causes which Mr. N. C. Kelkar[1] says brought about the downfall of the Maratha Empire. Mr. Kelkar has not elaborated this argument and hence we are in the dark as to what exactly he means. One writer, however, says that the sole cause why the Marathas lost their Empire was that they did not possess long-range guns.[2] This view is on the face of it absurd for there are several other factors which in combination with this one produced the phenomenon of the fall of the Empire. Leaving aside these other factors for the present let us see if absence of long-range guns is the only cause. In the first place, Maratha Guns were not so inferior in calibre as the writer supposes. Reviewing the respective military strength of the English and Shinde and Bhonsley Col. Malleson remarks that the latter had at Assaye "a splendid park of artillery extremely well manned."[3] At Laswari as Col. Malleson[4] says, "In vain did seventy guns pour shots and shell into their (English) ranks; in vain did the dense masses of the enemy spring forward to repel them. Nothing stopped them; they carried the guns." Lord Lake won nearly all his decisive victories by brilliant cavalry actions. This is what another author says about Lord Lake's victory over Holkar: "This was a marvellous success of 3,500 men over 60,000 and may be attributed to a great extent to the skilful combination of speed with effective fire."[5] To possess guns is one thing but effective fire is quite another thing and to allow the enemy to capture them is yet a third thing. Effective fire depends not upon guns but gunners and the Marathas had no good Maratha artillery men. The foreigners in their service either deserted them in the nick of time or could not be relied upon. The fact is Shinde's artillery caused great loss to the English at Assaye but it was not well supported by cavalry and infantry.[6] Again at Laswari the

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[1] *Marathe Va Ingraj*, Part II, p. 17.

[2] Quoted in the review of *Marathe Va Ingraj*, by M.M. D. V. Potdar, p. 12.

[3] *The Decisive Battles of India*, p. 264.

[4] Ibid., p. 289.

[5] Col. Denison: *A History of Cavalry*, p. 345.

[6] See notes relative to the transactions in the Maratha Empire, Fort William, Dec. 15, 1803, pp. 61-63, quoted by Sen in his *Military System of the Marathas*, p. 123.

English lost 838 in killed and wounded or one man out of every five engaged. The Maratha loss in the actual battle was probably not so great but in the pursuit which followed it they suffered terribly.[7] Victory in the field does not depend upon big guns alone as could be seen from the fate of Ibrahim Khan Gardi at Panipat. On the contrary the very first successes that the Marathas won in their final struggle with the English were won with the cavalry arm. Holkar had under his command over 60,000 light horse of the true Maratha type and 130 guns.[8] It was however with his cavalry, not with his guns, that Holkar defeated a combined movement made against him by Colonels Murray and Monsoon. The Marathas had tolerably good guns and if, as Sen [9] remarks, they afforded them little or no advantage in their final struggle for the Empire, it was because their confidence in artillery and trained infantry led the Maratha leaders to neglect their cavalry and the result was disastrous.[10] The Marathas lost their battles with Lord Lake because of their defective tactics, bad leadership, poor discipline and morale of the army and want of knowledge of even ordinary principles of the military science. From the beginning to the end they never took the offensive as they were, under the circumstances, incapable of taking any. In all these things the English were superior and we believe that whatever may have been the other points in their favour, the English certainly did not win their wars with Shinde and Holkar merely because of their arms of superior calibre. Other things being equal between two opposing armies, superiority in weapons will no doubt give advantage to the one which possesses it. But mere superiority in numbers or weapons do not decide success in wars, much less ruin of nations. Brilliant leadership has so many times turned defeats into victories against odds. The wars of Dupleix, Bussy, Clive, Munro, Lake and other great soldiers have repeatedly brought out this one principle that given the same kind of arms or nearly the same, disciplined armies, with proper tactical dispositions, skilful handling in the field and with superior strategy, in short led by superior generals, have always won. This law was so marvellously proved by Shivaji the Great himself and the Marathas generally against their native opponents. Shivaji the Great made up for his deficiency in numbers and inferiority of individual soldiers by his guerilla tactics and strict discipline. Babar did not owe his decisive victories over the Rajputs and the Pathans merely to his artillery tactics as some historians have remarked.[11] His victories were due as much to the guns of Ustad Ali Khan as to the flanking and rear attacks of the fiery Uzbegs and Babar's military skill in keeping reserves and making the tactical dispositions. Babar and Ahmad Shah Abdalli won the day because of their superior generalship. Victory in war is a complex phenomenon depending as it does on diverse causes not the least important of which are the personal qualities of the soldiers, and their generals. Col. Denison says, "There is one influence of the highest importance which the cavalry officer should thoroughly understand and always bear in mind and this is the Morale. Napoleon fully appreciated the value of it. He said that "the morale" in war is to the physical, in the ratio of three to one. There can be no doubt as to the correctness of this principle for the morale of the soldiers has always exerted more influence upon the result of battles than the more physical force."[12] There is in fact no limit to the successes which will be gained by forces with a high morale over extraordinary odds where their opponents are in a demoralised condition, as Col. Denison remarks. It was the bad morale of the armies under Doulatrao Shinde, Bapu Gokhale, Appasaheb Bhonsle, Jaswantrai Holkar, that gave the victories in the final campaigns of the Marathas to the English. All the astonishing successes of the Europeans in India are more or less due to this factor. Many are the instances where on the slightest reverse whole armies have melted away. Consequent on the disappearance of Vishwasrao, Sadashivrao Bhau lost at Panipat his initiative, prudence, promtitude of judgment, caution, fertility of resource, self-reliance, coolness and other distinguishing qualities of a great general and hence lost the battle. For these reasons it is simply unscientific to suggest that the Marathas lost their Empire because they did not have long-range guns. Even if they had possessed them, these would have been an encumbrance rather than an advantage like the ones that they already had. When the Europeans in their service left them, there were not natives equally skilful to ply them. In the absence of necessary technical knowledge which Europeans only possessed at that time long-range guns would have been of no avail. The Marathas could never in those days have hoped to attain precision of fire as will be clearly seen from Hari Pant Fadke's method of using his long-range guns. Khare says he used to fire his long-range guns from three or four miles so that if by chance a shell struck its target he would consider himself fortunate. The other object of Hari Pant Fadke in utilising these big guns was not to attack the enemy with determination but to be able to remove them to the rear in case the enemy attacked him.[13] Then again what is the use of big guns if you allow the English to capture them by a dashing cavalry attack? Thus to represent that the failure of the Marathas in their wars with Lord Lake, General Wellesley, General Munro and a host of other lesser officers, was due merely to the paucity of good guns, is highly misleading and betrays lack of knowledge of the military science. Are we sure of the moral equipment of our soldiers and generals, of the excellence of the Maratha military machine, scientific training of our Generals and other equally important conditions of a successful war? This is one point. Now let us consider the question from another point of view. We do not believe even for a single moment that the Marathas were so deficient in military equipment as to give to the English such an absolute advantage over them as the writer wants us to believe. The Marathas were hoping to get success at least in defensive warfare or else they would not have brought on themselves the enmity of the English. No army would ever get that kind of overwhelming superiority in weapons alone over its adversary so long as the royal path of imitation is open. For that we would have to imagine the English army equipped with twentieth century armaments and the Marathas with their old arms. But granting for argument's sake that the English had wonderful long-range guns which they used without coming into contact with the Marathas and therefore without any loss to themselves; granting that in war weapons is everything; why did not the Marathas possess such highly useful long-range

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[7] Col. Malleson: *Decisive Battles of India*, p. 290.

[8] Col. Denison, *A History of the Cavalry*, p. 344.

[9] *Military System of the Marathas*, p. 125.

[10] Geig's *Life of Sir Thomas Munro*, Vol. 1, pp. 354-355.

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[11] Sen: *Military System of the Marathas*, p. 111, and Sardesai: *Main currents of Maratha history*, p. 163.

[12] *A History of the Cavalry*, p. 441.

[13] Kelkar: *Marathe Va Ingraj*—Introduction by Khare, p. 7.

guns? The Marathas were aware of their efficiency as an offensive weapon since the days of Shivaji the Great. Why did they not manufacture them in their own factories? Similarly why did they not have a well-drilled army, disciplined and trained on the Western model? They had certainly known the value of such troops.

Their superior knowledge of artillery made the Portuguese so formidable in western and southern India long before the English came on the scene. Dupleix and the French had amply demonstrated the value of trained troops long before the Marathas thought of having their armies trained by European officers. James Mill says that the two important discoveries for conquering India were first the weakness of the native armies against European discipline and secondly the facility of imparting that discipline to natives in the service of Europeans. He adds: " Both these discoveries were made by the French." Elphinstone says that Dupleix was "The first who made an extensive use of disciplined sepoys." [14] Lyall remarks that high credit is fairly due to Dupleix for having first started on the right road towards European conquest in India.[15] If the vital importance of artillery and drill and discipline was brought home to the native rulers so early why did they not learn the the art of manufacturing munitions? Why did not the Marathas pick up the art of drilling and disciplining their soldiers on the European model? Did they not get enough time? As a matter of fact efforts were made in both the directions by the Marathas at any rate. Shivaji the Great had a regular artillery department called the Tophkhana, and Darukhana has been mentioned as one among his state departments.[16] He does not, however, appear to have maintained a gun-foundry of his own. He was entirely dependent on the European trading companies for his supply of guns and cannons. The question of trained infantry did not arise for him. Shivaji the Great was always handicapped by the lack of good artillery in his wars with the Siddis. He did not possess a sufficient number of guns and cannons, for when he wanted to strengthen the fort of Panhala he had to denude his strongholds in the Konkan of their guns.[17] He had experience of the English company's policy of not supplying him with ammunition and guns. Beginning then with the times of Shivaji the Great the Marathas were familiar with artillery and ammunition for over a century but they did nothing for their manufacture or improvement. Whatever guns and ammunition they manufactured were notoriously crude and clumsy.[18] In the second decade of the 18th century the Marathas still depended for their supply of artillery on the uncertain favour of the Europeans. Early in his reign Shahu had applied to the English Governor of Bombay for arms and ammunition and in 1713 Kanhoji Angre had addressed a similar request to the English. To both of these requests the English returned an answer in the negative.[19] Kanhoji also desired to have a place where he would be able to manufacture powder but could not establish such a factory for himself.

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[14] *Rise of the British Power in the East*, p. 226.

[15] *British Dominion in India,* p. 99.

[16] *Shiva Chatrapati,* p. 133.

[17] Sen: *Military System of the Marathas,* p. 115.

The Peshwas made some efforts to have their artillery and ammunition manufactured in their own factories. Baji Rao I had his own factory. During the reign of Madhavrao I a cannon-ball factory was established at Ambagaon in the Junnar District in 1765-66 and another was set up at Poona four years later for manufacturing cannons.[20] Thus some sort of cannon balls were made from cast iron and not by hand with the aid of hammers as Mr. Kelkar[21] says following Tone's opinion. Captain William Gordon who visited Baji Rao's factory writes (1739): " I visited the foundry where I saw many coehorns and bomb shells said to have been cast there and a form of a thirteen inch mortar. I was told they make such with great ease and have learned the art of running iron for making shot." [22] But either because these were not manufactured in large quantities or they were of inferior quality or because their cost of manufacture was high as Khare[23] remarks, the Marathas even so late as the latter half of the 18th century depended on foreigners for such supply and provided for them in their treaties with European nations.[24] They were still not seriously thinking of dispensing with foreign arms and the question of importance is why they could not shake off this humiliating dependence on their enemies for the supply of a commodity on which essentially rested their own success in war with them. The Marathas generally used to get their military stores from the Portuguese as the English were reluctant to supply them war material for obvious reasons.[25] Another remarkable fact was that the guns and muskets purchased from the English and the Portuguese were neither of the best type nor in a very good condition. Taking advantage of the abject conditions of the Marathas these cunning foreigners used to supply only such arms as were rejected as useless for their own military use. They used to kill in this fashion two birds with one shot, they used to make money by disposing off useless and unserviceable war material and at the same time kept their rivals in a false sense of security and satisfaction. It probably never occurred to the Marathas that any trick was being practised upon them or dire necessity made them put up with it even when known. That is exactly why Col. Tone protested in very strong terms when the practice was stopped by Home Authorities. His only fear was that "It will drive them to the expediat of making their own firelocks as Scindeah has done",[26] but on that score Col. Tone need not have worried so much. Nothing would have driven the Marathas in the 18th and 19th centuries to take self-reliant measures. They were then incapable of thinking out any system for themselves; such was their social condition. Even after Mahadaji's tardy attempt to have his own factory at Agra the Peshwa army was still dependent in the nineties of the 18th century on the English for their heavy artillery and small firearms. Mahadaji's arms were, as remarked by Col. Tone, "Very excellent ones, far superior to the ordinary European arms to be met with in the Bazars." But the peculiarity about it was that it was managed by Europeans on whose loyalty the Marathas could not rely in their wars with the English. They themselves never cared to master the science and hence the comparative efficiency of Mahadaji's Agra Factory was practically of no use to the Marathas in their wars against any European nation. Shivaji the Great had a limited supply of artillery for his forts and navy and as, in his days, field artillery had not come into vogue, he had none. The Marathas must have felt a keen want of this arm for it was impossible to think of capturing Janjira without fine artillery.[27] Had Baji Rao I some artillery with him he would have reaped the maximum advantage of his victory over the Nizam at Bhopal. It was his artillery that saved the Mughal army under Nizam from complete destruction on that occasion. During Nana Saheb Peshwa's time when the necessity for trained battalions of infantry was recognised under Muzafar Khan and Ismail Khan the Maratha army was better furnished with field artillery. By the middle of the 18th century the Marathas had attained to some familiarity with the use of the artillery. But the one serious defect of the system was that the department was still largely under the Portuguese and Indian Christians. The only gunner that Maharashtra produced in those days was Bhimrao Panshe of the 1st Maratha War and as compared with the European gunners he was nothing as an artillery man. On the whole, the record of the Maratha artillerymen was not a good one. Their shots passed over the troops at Panipat and fell a mile in the rear as Kashiraj Pandit, an eye-witness tells us. Arras would have been a victory for the Marathas if they had possessed good artillerymen. Lieutenant Moor was not favourably impressed with the operations of Parashram Bhau's artillery during the seige of Dharwar. He writes, " A gun is loaded and the whole people in the battery sit down, talk and smoke for half an hour when it is fired and if it knocks up a great dust it is thought sufficient; it is reloaded and the parties resume their smoking and conversation." [28] Such leisurely manner and slow firing could not be expected to make any impression on any European Army as was to be seen in the final struggle of the Marathas with the English. The larger number of bullocks required to carry gun, the clumsy and non-durable gun-carriages, the time required to clear a gun ready for action, and the small supply of ammunition supplied,—these made the artillery a useless encumbrance for the Maratha army. But they had greatest faith in their artillery and they used always to carry with them a large number of them for the sake of prestige,[29] and for show. Such was the unsatisfactory state of their artillery and what was true of artillery, was also true of the training of the army. The organisation of regular infantry and their leadership in the field were to the last entrusted to foreigners who proved in the end faithless to the cause of their masters. If the Marathas could not digest ordinary processes of gun-making, whence was to come suddenly that scientific spirit and knowledge necessary for new inventions? If there could be no good drill-sergeants among the Marathas, how could there be good generals? Thus they remained always at the mercy of the unscrupulous mercenaries and adventurers for the manufacture of their guns and munitions and the training, discipline, and leadership of their army. The Marathas themselves, as we shall see later on, were incapable at that stage of their social evolution of digesting Western methods or Western science. Theirs was a simple medieval society, devoid of any higher knowledge and therefore unable not only to master any new idea but also to see the necessity of beginning the study of the necessary sciences behind such ideas. Dire need, born of experience, only made them borrow a complex technical system without its science and they had justly to pay the price of superficial imitation. In the hands of such people therefore even readymade long-range guns would have proved quite ineffective. Instead of saying that want of long-range guns caused the fall of the Maratha Empire let us say that want of proper education and the fundamental absence of progressive forces in the Maratha society was the cause of its fall. The Marathas were not in a position to use effectively either big guns or small while the English were superior in knowledge and other essential matters and could therefore use their guns with advantage to themselves.

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[18] For an account of Indian cannon see Irvine: *Army of the Indian Mughals*, pp. 113-132.

[19] Sen: *Military System of the Marathas*, pp. 116, 117.

[20] *Peshwa Diaries*, Vol. IX, pp. 333 & 335.

[21] *Marathe Va Ingraj*, Part II, p. 54, also Illustration of some Institutions of the Maratha People, pp. 56 & 57.

[22] Quoted by Sen: *Military System of the Maratha*, p. 117; and also by M.M. Potdar: Review of Kelkar's *Marathe Va Ingraj*, p. 13.

[23] Introduction to Kelkar's *Marathe Va Ingraj*, p. 6.

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[24] Sen: *Military System of the Marathas,* pp. 117, 118.

[25] In 1782 the Portuguese supplied a quantity of sulphur for the Maratha Admiral Anandrao Dhulap. Parshram Bhau received 500 maunds of powder from Goa while engaged in seige of Dharwar. Even Mahadaji Shinde purchased ammunition from the Portuguese in the 1st Maratha war—Sen: *Military System of the Marathas,* p. 118. It should not be supposed that the Marathas depended for such supplies on the Portuguese alone. They used to get it from Bombay also. See Peshwa Dairies, Vol. III, p. 119 & Vol. IX, p. 328.

[26] *Illustration of some Institutions of the Maratha People,* pp. 54-55.

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[27] In 1692 Rai Dalpat Rao Bundella had some artillery with him and therefore defeated a numerically superior Maratha force. See Scott's *Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 82.

[28] Moor: *A Narrative of the Operations of Captain Little's Detachment*, p. 30.

This theory again can be verified, as pointed out by M.M.

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[29] *Itihas Sangrah*—Aitihasik Kirkol Prakarna, p. 3.

D. V. Potdar, from the history of the Sikhs. The Sikhs had avoided both the mistakes of the Marathas; they had never given Europeans positions of trust and they had improved their artillery and had brought it at last to the level of the English. But owing to other causes (for they had as good guns as the English) they too were ultimately conquered. Thus the mere non-possession of good guns at that particular period when the science of war had not progressed would not have in practice produced any serious adverse effect on the fortunes of the Maratha Empire if the Marathas had other qualities requisite for good government or successful war. They did not possess such other qualities both civil and military which was an undoubted fact and hence added to these, the deficiency in big guns became a glaring defect in the Maratha military system.

On the contrary the English possessing the other necessary qualities, personal as well as social, turned their superiority in artillery also to good account. What gave them this superiority, not in the field of weapons alone but in diplomatic, political, personal, and every other field, was their superior culture, better education, higher level of knowledge. All their advantages over the Marathas whether in war or in peace were the result of this basic fact of their progressive social forces the absence of which placed the Maratha Nation, the Maratha society, at a corresponding disadvantage. All the defects of the Marathas that contributed collectively to the downfall of the Maratha Empire of which want of a disciplined army, good guns, and plentiful munitions are but one, proceeded, as we shall see hereafter, from the one fact, viz., the condition of the colossal ignorance of their society as a whole, the non-existence of progressive social spirit among the Marathas, in short from their backward social environment.

The defect as regards the artillery or trained battalions along with those others of political organisation and national character to which we shall have occasion to refer in the course of our future discussion is at bottom a social defect due to the particular social environment of the Marathas. The cause which created these backward environmental conditions of the Maratha society is the cause of their several results, viz., those particular defects which are generally supposed to be the causes of their downfall and is therefore the main cause of the fall of the Marathas.

II. *Want of Unity, Want of Discipline and Want of National Patriotism*

Mr. N. C. Kelkar gives this as the second of his two real or main causes.[30] We have already noticed his first. Thus Mr. Kelkar seems to think that other causes put forth by other writers have no reference to the question under discussion. Some writers give only one, e.g., want of big guns or caste prejudices or any other as the sole cause and like to overlook the others which they try to explain away. We shall therefore clear this preliminary question before we proceed with the discussion. Causes of social phenomena—and historical events are social phenomena—cannot be determined with anything like mathematical precision. This may be possible in physical sciences but not in social sciences. The reason is that human motives are complex and that the actions of man are the combined result of many causes which operate at one and the same time. Of these motives some may be stronger than others but nevertheless all contribute something or other towards the production of a given result. Hence in our opinion any attempt to leave out of account even minor factors because they appear to be insignificant is futile.

It is possible to point out one sole or main cause as we shall endeavour to bring out in the course of our discussion but it is from another point of view.

Almost all historians agree in regarding this factor as one of the causes of the downfall of the Marathas Empire and it is true enough.[31] In the final struggle with the English when Baji Rao II signed away at Bassein his independence and accepted, owing to his short-sightedness and want of patriotism, the position of a subordinate ally of the English, the Feudatories did not combine as in the first Maratha war to repel the attack. Holkar chose to remain aloof and the last chance of a successful war against the English was lost for ever. We do not believe in the certainty of such a success even if all had united, because there was a vast difference between the respective strengths of the parties. While the Marathas had degenerated, the English had considerably improved their position in India. The mutual jealousies and quarrels had become more bitter, moral inspiration with each succeeding generation had progressively gone down until at last it had ceased altogether to animate the generation of Baji Rao II; purely personal motives and selfish aims had taken its place; the character and civil and military ability of the leaders had been at its lowest ebb with the result that there was none of outstanding capacity to lead the Marathas in the battlefield or unite them in a common endeavour against the foreign enemy. The partial success of the Marathas in the first Maratha war was due to the patriotic efforts of Nana and Mahadaji but there were no such leaders in the days of Baji Rao II to guide the destinies of the Maratha Nation. On the contrary in the first Maratha war there were more powerful enemies in the field against the English, viz., the Nizam, the Emperor, and Hyder, in addition to the Marathas so that a formidable Confederacy could be formed and it was this circumstance which had induced the English in their comparatively weak condition to detach the Marathas by giving favourable terms. But in the days of Baji Rao II, the Mysore Kingdom had been wiped out of existence and the English alone had swallowed that territory, thus gaining in vast resources. They now commanded the resources of the Nizam as well. In other respects also they had become stronger than before. Military science had advanced; their political machine had been oiled and greased and the friction between the Governors and the Governor-General had been removed; the jealousy between the members of his Council and the Governor-General had been rendered impossible so that a repetition of the quarrels of Warren Hastings' times was now unthinkable; thus a unity of command had been achieved; the generals leading the English armies were better and more able soldiers. This time the Marathas had to meet their enemies, with their position considerably weakened. Hence we do not believe that the Marathas would have gained a sure victory over their adversaries even if they had united. But the disunity in their ranks clearly point out how selfish motives had superseded all other nobler instincts in the Marathas. When finally Baji Rao II tried to throw off the English tutelage, the feudatories did not again combine. Evidently they had not grown wiser by experience or their bitter experience had made them cowards and hence they were not inclined to risk their all in a vain combat with the English with such a vacillating man as Baji Rao II as their leader. The age of Baji Rao II was an age of moral decline. It was an era of rank selfishness, narrow prejudices, and colossal cowardice. It is useless to expect patriotic or noble conduct in the cause of their country from those selfish poltroons.

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[30] *Marathe Va Ingraj*, p. 17 (Part II).

[31] Khare and Rajwade say the same thing directly or indirectly—see Introduction to Kelkar's *Marathe Va Ingraj*, pp. 3-5; and *Itihasik Prastavana* (Vol. III), Introduction, p. 185.

As to the national patriotism, the Marathas, ever since the days of Shivaji the Great, did not possess any. They had only religious or racial patriotism. Love of country in the modern sense they did not possess. Several Maratha families in spite of the fact that their own National State had now been established served under the enemies of their country, e.g., the Nizam, the English, etc. Neither was any effort made to bring them back to allegiance by force. The Marathas of those days did not consider it treason to fight against their own country. The exalted ideas of "country" and "countrymen" are a modern growth in our society. It was customary in those days to go over to the enemies as a matter of course if the Sirdars did not get what they wanted at home. Such selfish men who utilised the prevailing conditions for advancing their own personal cause were sure of their jahagir from the Nizam or the Raja of Kolhapur or any other enemy of the Maratha State. In the days of Shivaji the Great and during the War of Independence this tendency had been held in check for some time but after that period it was always on the increase. It is remarkable that no Englishman betrayed the interests of his country in the manner in which Natu and others betrayed the Maratha cause. Several Marathas helped the English by supplying them with information for which they would have been promptly shot in any Western country. Even those English officers who were in the service of Shinde or Holkar refused to fight against their countrymen and either resigned or preferred death. On the contrary the southern Maratha Jahagirdars hastened to join the army of General Wellesley against Baji Rao II to save themselves. Every man in those degenerate times acted on the principle of "everyone for himself". The English never felt any dearth of Maratha sepoys to fight for them. Not only this; prominent Maratha officers while in the service of the State accepted presents of money or land from the hands of the enemy. While it is well known that an English physician accepted no personal reward for his professional services to the Mughal Emperor but asked for commercial concessions for his countrymen; that Dupleix, Clive, and others spent their private money on public account for which Dupleix died in miserable poverty; and that the Marathas did not scruple to appropriate public money for private affairs. Bribery, it appears, was not then considered a crime. There was a veritable crop of Maratha traitors; no Englishman betrayed his country's cause. One French officer named Lieutenant De Terranean betrayed to the English the passage of the river when Chandranagar was taken by the English. " He sent a part of his money (i.e. of the bribe from the English) home to his old and infirm father who, however, returned it when he heard the disgraceful behaviour of his son. M. Terranean felt much mortified at this. Shame seized the hem of his garment, he shut himself up; after a few days his body was found hanging at the gate of his house, suspended by means of a towel. It was plain that he had committed suicide."[32] In this respect these Westerners were veritable angels as compared to the Marathas.

The Marathas were individualists by natural tendency. They never knew what discipline meant. Hence naturally they never conducted any institution on a basis of co-operation. Whatever the harm to their cause, if a person's opinion or advice was not accepted or he was not allowed to have his own way, he would immediately oppose everything else and if he did not succeed in his ambitions the path of deserting to the enemy was always open. Thus personal quarrels were the rule of the day. A majority of our nation had no public spirit or outlook. They used to take everything in a personal light. Thus Moropant Peshwa and Annaji Datto, Santaji and Dhanaji, Chandrasen and Balaji, Baji Rao I and Shripatrao, Nana and Sakharam Bapu, Narayan Rao and Raghoba, Tara Bai and Nana Saheb, Nana and Mahadaji—all these great and capable men had bitter personal quarrels, never considering for a moment how much harm would be done to the national cause by their internecine feuds.

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[32] Blockman: Notes on Siraj-ud-doula—Journal of the Asiatic Society in 1867—quoted by Major B. D. Basu: *Rise of the Christian Power in India,* Vol. I, p. 164.

The tendency, therefore, was for the more successful or able person to drive out the other from the field or kill him or to crush him completely. This would naturally result in domestic feuds which created immense civil unrest in the body politic and the defeated rival would turn a traitor to his country by joining the enemy. If such was the situation as regards the high personages, we can very well imagine the condition of other lesser personages. They would stoop to anything; so long as the immediate object was achieved and their feelings of revenge were satisfied; the means, however dishonourable, did not matter to them in the least. The ethics of a case had no place in their system.

Another tendency was for the government to be purely personal. Whoever was the strongest, whether a King or a Minister or his Fadnavis, he had invariably the direction of the Government in his sole hands. No criticism or suggestion was either invited or considered. The result was the country had to suffer from the consequences of the errors of judgment of the superman. Even in matters where one-man rule was quite essential to the success of the enterprise as in military campaigns the Marathas of those days would not obey implicitly unless a strong man exacted obedience but sometimes even the strongest had to pay the penalty, e.g., Santaji Ghorpade. Orderliness in doing things great or small, was never prized, like the Romans, for its own sake. All these defects were to be seen in their most aggravated form in the generation of Baji Rao II and their fatal result too inevitably followed. Thus far we admit that want of unity in the Maratha ranks, want of discipline, and want of patriotism—these three failings were a cause of their downfall. But the question to consider is why they had failings, why the English did not possess them. Not that individuals did not possess them. The company's servants in the beginning were notorious for their corruption. The personal quarrels between Hastings and his councillors, between the Calcutta Government and the Bombay Government were well known. These were, however, remedied at once when their ruinous effect on the affairs of the Company was soon noticed and the

English society of which the Parliament was the representative took immediate measures to make their repetition impossible. Even if the civil servants and military officers raised a rebellion, the English society did not meekly surrender; the rebels were put down. Similarly the contemporary English society instituted an inquiry into the conduct of Clive and Hastings, two of their greatest Governors-General. The English society was strong enough to bring even the mightiest to book. The fact was that the rebels did not get popular support. In their society the level of the mass knowledge was such, their institutions were such, their legal system was such that these wayward tendencies would never get encouragement at the hands of the public. Traitors would be so much socially execrated that their life would become a burden to them. We have quoted the example of the French Lieutenant before and it beautifully illustrates the force of public opinion. In our country people were so much ignorant and our system of law was such that rebels have only to raise their standards and plenty of supporters would flock to them. There was neither public opinion nor the strong arm of the Law to restrain these vagaries of an individual or an interested person. Our people were so deficient in general knowledge that they were in no condition to have opinions of their own on many questions, good, bad, or indifferent. They had not the ability to foresee the evil effects of their conduct. The Marathas had no legislative organs so that progressive laws could not be passed regarding problems as they arose. In the first quarter of the 19th century the Governor-General had all the powers concentrated in his hands; he was as autocratic as Nana Fadnavis but while the former was accountable to the people of England the latter was never called upon to render the account of his stewardship by anybody. Their system, therefore, made officers irresponsible autocrats. In the absence of any regular channels for ventilating grievances, defiance of authority or desertion to enemy camp were the only remedies left to an aggrieved party. We need not, therefore, be surprised at the want of discipline or want of unity among the Marathas of those days. We have not still those qualities in us. That again is a social problem; our institutions had never such a training as their objective. Whence could the Marathas of Baji Rao II's time get those virtues of unity, patriotism, and discipline all of a sudden when the crisis came? Throughout their lives they had been leading a contrary life. Did the men themselves even know that they lacked these qualities and their easy subjugation by a foreign power was due to a lack of those virtues? The success of the English must have come to them as a surprise or as a bolt from the blue. Why do we lack them even now? Now at least we know our defects and we may strive to correct them. But how do we now know what our defects are? We have far advanced in knowledge, in intellectual power, in education, in experience, all of which the Marathas in the beginning of the 19th century lacked.

Take the case of Captain Keigwin's rebellion (1683). The garrison of Bombay headed by Captain Keigwin confined the deputy of the Governor of Surat, declared they held the island for the king and that they would submit to no other authority.[33] Supposing the regiments sent against him could be bought over it would have been quite possible for him to set up a government of his own at Bombay. The wonder was not that there was such a rebellion but that such an unlawful thing even in the 17th century could not succeed. Their community as a whole would not tolerate such a thing. Without supporters, he could not create trouble in their administration. On the contrary Raghoba in the 18th century brought his country to the verge of ruin because he had many misguided or selfish followers. Even among the Barbhais he had his secret partisans. Why did the Marathas support Raghoba's act of treason? Because they had never any education. The level of knowledge of every sort was indeed very low. Questions of individual and public morality, questions of public and private virtues are ultimately social. In a favourable social environment virtues of every description thrive; they are smothered in an adverse atmosphere. Knowledge, education, experience, give the tone to society. Law has a restraining as well as a directing influence in a society. Institutions are meant to answer the calls of the social needs of a nation. You cannot have social virtues like patriotism, habit of friendly co-operation, discipline, etc., all at once in a society. They must be steadily cultivated and it is a slow process. We shall see later on why the Maratha society could not possess them in Baji Rao's time. In the meanwhile let us point out that this factor also is the result of our medieval society and its overall background atmosphere.

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[33] G. Duff, Vol. I, pp. 273-274.

III. *Caste, Caste Hatred, and Its Effects*

How far caste system, caste hatred, or caste jealousy are responsible for the downfall of the Maratha Empire? This is a very vexed question to tackle particularly because caste bitterness has increased in recent times. There is a tendency in certain quarters to attribute directly the decline and downfall of the Marathas to caste jealousy and it is due to human weakness which easily connects a disaster with its immediate antecedent under the stress of mental irritations which the disaster brings in its wake. We do not believe that caste system is a good social institution but our attitude is different from that of those who take a most narrow and malicious view of the matter. That caste pride and the narrow spirit which it brings into being are enemical to political unity, and national solidarity is certain and hence it is a source of weakness in a society. Whatever might have been its advantages in ancient times, it is a fact that the Hindu society has now only its disadvantages. In practice caste divisions tend to generate a narrow exclusive spirit which is fatal to patriotism or nationalism. Caste system has shown in the past a tendency to create sub-divisions within the four castes till at last we have quite a crop of these castes and sub-castes. From another point of view also no reasonable man will support caste system. It is impossible in these days to have a privileged class in society like the Brahmins specially if it is hereditary. Privileged classes even on other grounds, like the House of Lords, are not tolerated. Then again we cannot, without doing injustice, confine certain professions to certain castes and the moment we give freedom in choosing professions, the moment we drop the hereditary element, the caste system as we know it now ceases to be. Further, even as Varnas based only on certain definite qualities and functions, the ancient Hindu system will not work. The reason is modern social needs are complex and there is no water-tight division of functions. Even a Kshatriya and a Vaishya must now receive certain general education to be able to carry out the functions of his caste in an efficient manner. Compulsory military service is now universal and there are occasions when the whole population has to bear arms. Some Brahmins have shown better aptitude for the military and commercial career and some other castes for the literary and professional vocations originally meant for Brahmins alone. It is therefore impracticable even in its original form to retain the system.

The question we must consider here is whether caste jealousies contributed to the fall of the Empire; if so to what extent? Our opinion is that caste jealousy and bitterness have undoubtedly contributed to the fall of the Maratha Empire but it is a minor factor. There are other stronger causes of the fall and we believe that if the Marathas had retained their other defects like the want of knowledge, etc., and discarded their caste jealousies and dissensions even then they would have been conquered. We are discussing here in a restricted sense the bad effects of the caste-pride and not the part the system of social divisions based on caste or varna played in the Hindu society. In so far as the Varnashram system produced those social conditions which in the end resulted in the decline of the Marathas, the system must bear its full share of the blame. From that point of view it should be remembered that the Brahmin Peshwas had nothing to do with the social decline of the Marathas. Several writers would like to suggest that caste rivalries and hatred created disunion among the ranks of the Marathas and thus brought about their fall. This view is held by Sircar who seems to regard caste-divisions as they obtained under the later Peshwas to be one of the direct causes of the fall of the Empire.[34] This view is extremely one-sided. It is very difficult to maintain such a position because selfish personal motives irrespective of caste played a very great part in the creation of those degenerate conditions which were the antecedents of the fall of the Maratha Empire. We cannot say with definiteness how much caste hatred played its part in bringing about disunion among the Marathas and how much, the other motives. Human motives are mixed and we believe Marathas were influenced to a great extent in their political conduct by selfish individual ends. We cannot determine, for example, how much Doulatrao Shinde and Jaswantrai Holkar, who finally drove Baji Rao II into the arms of the English, were actuated by caste hatred and how much by other motives. Caste jealousy, no doubt, played some part in political matters to the detriment of the interests of the State after the death of Madhavrao. It strengthened to some extent towards the end of the 18th century personal rivalry and other bad tendencies but the latter were not due primarily to caste hatred. Had there been no caste rivalry, still events would have taken the same course with the same fated result. Thus we do not regard caste hatred to be an important factor in the want of union among the Marathas. Love of power and of political ascendency in the Empire, greed of a jahagir and such other selfish motives were more potent causes of their decline. Baji Rao II did not certainly invite the English intervention because he was a Brahmin. He was a degenerate human being and his motives were purely personal. Gaikwad was a Maratha but he also threw himself on the protection of the English. Bhonsle was a Maratha but he made his treaty with Warren Hastings in the 1st Maratha war against national interests. The southern Maratha jahagirdars were anxious to save themselves from ruin by withdrawing their support from their fellow-casteman and overlord Baji Rao II; Shinde and Holkar did not allow national feelings to influence them to such an extent as to make common cause with Baji Rao II during his last campaign against the English.

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[34] *Shivaji and His Times*, pp. 429-432.

Had there been a weak Brahmin Raja at Satara, even so Balaji and his successors of the Bhat family would have usurped the chief power in the State. The Peshwas though Brahmins were the ablest Marathas of their times and deserved to get the supreme direction of the State in their hands. Once they became the supreme authority in the land, they never neglected the national interests upto the time of Baji Rao II. If they were selfish, other Sirdars were equally so. All Marathas were selfish in those days and non-Brahmin Marathas would have done the same thing. Hence we do not hold the Peshwas specially responsible for the downfall of the Empire. The responsibility of the catastrophe must be borne by all the Marathas and their defective social and political organisation.

Another point which obscures the question of determining the exact part of the caste-hatred in Maratha politics is the fact that other good or lofty sentiments held the influence of caste pride in check. To the last the Marathas were actuated by nobler instincts even if the force of such feelings had progressively deteriorated generation after generation since the glorious days of Shivaji the Great and the War of Independence. The Marathas as a whole were proud of their Empire and were jealous of its independence and had there been a capable leader at hand perhaps he would have been able to unite them in the common cause.

Now let us examine the attitude of some other writers who either categorically deny that caste rivalry and hatred had anything to do with the fall of the Maratha Empire or minimising its effect on the Maratha polity, hold that caste bitterness had practically no influence on the course of political events. These writers aim indirectly at proving that caste divisions have no connection whatever with politics or national solidarity and hence vaguely suggest that the caste system as a social system may be continued without any harm to the body politic. Khare[35] and Kelkar[36] are the chief exponents of this view. Khare has not given any reasons in support of his opinions. He has simply argued from the fact that caste differences were not a direct powerful cause of the downfall of the Maratha Empire and concluded that therefore they have no connection whatever with politics. Kelkar has advanced more definite arguments and has made an attempt to minimise the bad effects of the caste pride and caste hatred. He says that caste differences existed from ancient times and it did not stand in the way of conquering territory from the Muslims. Hence it could not have produced bad effects towards the end of the 18th century. There were indeed caste differences since ancient times but their character was different under Shivaji the Great, Sambhaji, Rajaram, Tara Bai, and even Shahu, and under the later Peshwas, i.e., from the period of the Peshwa supremacy. Upto Shahu's death caste system was there but the elements of bitterness and jealousy were first introduced into Maratha politics, may be by accidental cause, since the rise of an ambitious Brahmin, Balaji Vishwanath, to the position of the Peshwa. Even in those early times we hear Marathas like Raghuji Bhonsle warning Shahu about the " Brahmin " designs.

At that time the bitterness was due more to personal rivalry than to caste differences but it is significant that the cry was raised. Baji Rao I had not much narrow Brahminical spirit and hence his quarrels with his colleagues were the result of personal and other differences. Another reason why the communal jealousies were not so strong at that time was that up to his death Shahu's authority, though eclipsed by the first two Peshwas, was yet sufficiently strong to check their purely caste aberrations. Brahmins also had not as yet shown any conspicuous military ability.

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[35] Introduction to Kelkar's *Marathe Va Ingraj*, p. 18.
[36] *Marathe Va Ingraj*, pp. 36-42 (Part II).

Except Baji Rao I and his brother Chimaji Appa there were none others who were equal in military talents to the Maratha Sirdars. Baji Rao I as the greatest military leader of his generation reaped the maximum worldly advantage himself but he could not have created Brahmin Jahagirdars partly because there were no capable Brahmin lieutenants, partly because the communal rivalry had not begun as yet to operate forcibly among the ranks of Sirdars, and partly because Shahu was yet the *de facto* Monarch even if weak. Shahu twice interposed his royal authority and smoothed matters, between Baji Rao I and Dabhade and Nana Saheb and Raghuji. In both cases communal vagaries received a check from the sovereign. It was also a fact that Nana Saheb had other troubles to manage and hence he thought it more diplomatic to win over Raghuji to his cause by making concessions. Pure caste differences could not under the circumstances operate freely. Besides the King himself never made any caste distinctions and selected his officers from all castes to suit the political needs. Whoever was useful to the King was selected irrespective of caste. Shivaji the Great never observed any caste differences and the same tradition continued through the War of Independence to the days of Shahu. Shivaji the Great made special efforts to have a due mixture of all castes and equal opportunity was given to all alike. As the reigning Monarchs did not make any distinction between his subjects on the score of their caste, there was no room for caste rivalry as such. But the situation changed when Nana Saheb succeeded in making himself supreme in the State and the capital was removed to Poona. We do not blame Nana Saheb for trying to get the supremacy or for concentrating the State power in his own hands. He was the best man and under the social conditions, when personal rule was the only form of government, it was natural that he should wield the supreme authority in the State. But the change of capital, the attempt to make his position in the Empire supreme, and the weakening of the Monarchy—all these facts tended to create communal ill-feeling which was added to personal ambitions and both gave rise to a strong faction spirit. Damaji Gaikwad, Tara Bai, Umabai Dabhade and Sakwerbai, the widowed queen, must have found it difficult to forget that Nana Saheb was a Brahmin and hence they must have been more bitter against the Peshwa. Their determined opposition to Nana Saheb must have been due to caste hatred at any rate partially. Defeated in the contest, both because of the Peshwa's superior diplomacy and army, the parties had to accept the subordinate position but the Peshwa set a bad example which was copied by other Sirdars. Personal interests and personal hatreds must have been reinforced by caste hatred since that time. Raghoba at first received help from Shinde, Holkar, and other Sirdars and for a time even Mahadaji held himself aloof in the first Maratha war. The Gaikwads were never reconciled to the Peshwa rule to the last. The Bhonsles followed always an independent policy. Thus the interests of the State were to some extent weakened. That the caste-hatred did not produce serious civil wars was due to the presence of foreign enemies, good sense of individuals like Madhavrao, Nana Fadnavis, and Mahadaji and non-completion of the Maratha conquests in the south and in the north. Some vague national sentiment had also kept these fissiparous tendencies in check. But the later Peshwas favoured Brahmins in making civil appointments and after Nana Saheb, the Brahmin Peshwa, became the sole central authority, the other castes fell into the background. The Prabhus, the Marathas and the Saraswats sought employment both military and civil at the courts of the feudal chiefs, not at Poona. The advice of these embittered men to their masters must have driven one more nail in the coffin of national solidarity. Almost all the southern Maratha jahagirdars were Brahmins. The existence of communal bitterness can be seen from the correspondence of the Patwardhan family wherein Gopalrao Patwardhan repeatedly speaks of Sakharam Bapu in communal terms. He hated Sakharam Bapu who was the chief adviser of Raghoba because the latter was a Deshastha. Caste hatred played a part in the civil wars of Raghoba and it had perhaps moved the Peshwa to annihilate the Angre family, even with the foreign help.

Ranade[37] remarks, "The rivalry thus set up however proved among other causes most harmful to the general interests." Thus there can be no doubt that the caste hatred which was dormant in the days of Shivaji the Great became from Nana Saheb's time onwards active. The Brahmin sovereignty created naturally a pride among the Brahmins and disappointment in personal ambitions led the contemporary Marathas to exploit these caste differences whenever such a policy suited them. Caste, therefore, in our opinion, played a subordinate part in national politics at that time but it nevertheless played some part and it caused civil unrest under the later Peshwas. The earlier Peshwas especially Madhavrao did not however treat his subjects as regards justice from these caste motives and in other respects too they were alive to its injurious effects.

The circumstances were such, the Hindu social system was such that the Peshwas must have resorted to creating Brahmin Sirdars as a political measure. They cannot be blamed if they held the Brahmin supporters more trustworthy or more loyal. They could not have thought of other methods, viz., enlisting the support of the masses as against the Sirdars, methods which Western Monarchs used with so much devastating effect against the ambitions of the feudal barons. In this respect the position of the Peshwas as ministers and not sovereigns was always their weakness. Besides there was no strong middle class as in the West. Big towns had also not risen in India just as they rose in Europe after the 14th century. The Peshwas too though patriotic were not wholly unselfish. All these circumstances must have combined to render certain caste bias in the Peshwa government inevitable. But this partiality was not in the interests of the State. In justification of the Peshwa's policy Mr. Narsinh Chintaman Kelkar[38] gives instances from present-day life and remarks that it is in accordance with human nature that a superior officer should appoint his caste-men to subordinate positions. If caste bias is natural, the evil effects of the communal rivalry, jealousy, hatred, and the consequent disunion are also natural and the communal policy will not fail sooner or later to make its effects felt in politics. It will surely weaken the national forces in any society and such a society too will find it difficult to meet a foreign foe in an external war. The tendency on the part of an officer of a particular caste to appoint his subordinates from his own caste, be he a Prabhu, a Brahmin, a Saraswat, a Parsi or a Muslim, has even in our own times created so much bitterness in our public life. Do not the Brahmins feel keenly such differential treatment when given to them by others? Similarly other castes are clamouring for the recognition of the communal principle in executive matters also. Does this communal outlook help the national cause or do the Englishmen reap all the advantage of our differences? Is not caste-pride an hindrance to social and political unity? Even the English could not help giving Indians higher posts and one of our demands is the Indianization of the services. It is the duty of a public officer to make efforts to be above caste spirit for he must remember that he is jeopardizing the interests of the State by his communal bias in public administration. Impartiality in public affairs is a special duty which he owes to the State. Practised as an universal principle of public conduct, caste-bias will surely produce serious problems in our future politics.

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[37] *Rise of the Maratha Power*, p. 140.

[38] *Marathe Va Ingraj*, p. 37 (Part II).

We agree with Mr. Kelkar in holding that caste-pride alone did not produce disunion in Maharashtra. As we have pointed out before other factors existed apart from caste-hatred but we believe that caste-jealousy strengthened those tendencies, personal or otherwise. It is a matter of opinion as to how much importance should be attached to each factor. We do not, as remarked above, give importance to caste rivalry as a main cause of the fall of the Maratha Empire but at the same time it cannot be dismissed lightly as Mr. Kelkar does.

Mr. Kelkar incidentally observes that the birth of great men does not depend upon social conditions. To forget his selfishness a man must have either the example of contemporary great men before him or else patriotism must arise in him of its own accord. Hence patriotism does not depend upon the disappearance of caste differences in a society. A nation can be patriotic in spite of the existence of castes. What is true of caste differences is true of religious differences. In Europe, persons following different religious creeds are equally proud of their country. Protestant England and Catholic France and Italy fought on one side against Protestant Germany and Catholic Austria. Muslim Arabs fought on the side of the English against the Muslim Turks who had espoused the German cause.

The birth of great men depends largely in our opinion on social environment, on social ideals that for the time being animate a society. There are no historical examples of great men being born in a society which has degenerated. When a society decays owing to false social ideals, habits of luxury, or long peace, the social atmosphere is such that it cannot produce any great man. For several centuries no hero was born in India before the rise of Shivaji the Great. And he was born only when there was a material change in the economic condition of the people and when the changed material circumstances created the political and social ideal of Swarajya for the Marathas of those days. The social aspirations of the Marathas were fully reflected in Shivaji the Great. He was in fact representative of the times combining in him the best ideals of the Maratha society. The times produced not one man, Shivaji, but several of his loyal and patriotic companions came to the forefront and served their country selflessly. In the War of Independence the patriotic selfless spirit still lived and hence we find that Sambhaji, though degraded in other respects, yet showed heroism in the cause of his religion. He did not embrace Aurangzeb's religion but preferred death. Similarly Rajaram and his companions were animated with the same spirit. Thus the social ideals were reflected in the men of the times in more or less degree. But when a new principle like jahagirdari system less lofty, less noble, but more selfish was introduced owing to a change in external circumstances selfishness began to work in the Maratha society, luxury began to sap its vital ethical forces, and we find the Marathas on the downward path of decay and decline. For some time the ideal of Hindu Padpadashahi held the selfish individual tendencies among the Sirdars in check and produced great men like Baji Rao I and Mahadaji Shinde. But soon the individual aspirations began to predominate and the Sirdars began to quarrel among themselves or with the central authority, for personal supremacy. National interests were neglected though not wholly. Finally when the social decline was complete men like Shivaji the Great or Baji Rao I or Mahadaji Shinde ceased to be born and the man representing his age, Baji Rao II, made his appearance. Thus we see how each era produced its representative man. Social needs, social ideals, social aims, thoughts, and philosophy, in short social atmosphere has therefore a close connection with the birth of great men. The question whether a society will strive after the attainment of high ideals depends upon the question whether that society possesses the requisite social forces. Why was no great Mughul Emperor born after Aurangzeb? It was because the Mughal society decayed. How can we inculcate patriotism on the mind of a person if he is surrounded by selfish men? The environment has a powerful effect on the mind of an individual and he becomes great if it is morally good or may become evil if it is degenerate. Man is not born great in the sense that he is great from his very birth. Receiving as he does his impressions from the surroundings, it is his environment that fosters good qualities in him or makes him bad, and if he possesses the initial spark he becomes great. But even if he possesses the initial spark it is smoothered in a hostile atmosphere. Why a particular great man possesses the elements of greatness in him is explained away by the theory of mutation or that of " Elan Vital " as Professor Henry Berghon has propounded it. A morally exalted environment no doubt helps this process of producing great men. Even the mere existence of castes viewed at as Varnas based on merit alone is likely to create a separatist social tendency in a society which in course of time may tend to destroy patriotism. Caste differences, as we know them in their ugly form, have already created a mental attitude in us which will not easily allow our people to digest the sentiment of patriotism unless we are convinced either by education, knowledge, or experience, of their danger to the society and unless we make conscious efforts to eradicate them. If we have made some progress in the direction of love of our country it is because the level of our knowledge has gone up and we are convinced that the caste pride is ruinous to the larger interests of our society. We are forgetting our caste prejudices as our environment has already changed, may be from any cause. Hence though theoretically it is possible for patriotism and caste to co-exist in a society, their practical working tends to destroy each other. A society will cultivate the one or the other according as its social and economic needs demand and the one that is cultivated will gradually wipe out the other. Hereditary caste system as a social institution, can never exist side by side with patriotism, because the latter widens our sympathies and creates a feeling of brotherhood towards our fellow-citizens. In practice again patriotism, being a sentiment of wider content, requires a higher level of knowledge and a wider outlook on the part of the society. The question of demolishing the one (caste) and setting up the other does not arise. The process which diffuses knowledge and culture in a society broadens its outlook and makes it alive to the pernicious influence of caste patriotism. We at present look at the question of caste from diverse aspects and seeing how that antiquated institution has become obsolete, and how it no longer serves any of our modern social needs, are convinced of its injurious effects in its present form and of impracticability of its continuance. We discard it in favour of a higher and a more useful ideal, a more living creed of Nationalism. The gathering waters of civilization and culture are constantly wearing away the rock of caste system, and the sentiment of patriotism is finding its own way.

The education of a citizen on proper lines, his changed outlook, his changed life, and new aspirations and needs,—in short, the change in his social environment produces a corresponding desire to effect a change in his social institutions. When many men think alike and desire to make a change, the particular social institution is either abolished or recast. A new one is substituted in its place and its permanence is guaranteed by its being in accord with the new social environment. Thus the process of metamorphosis goes on and " the old order changeth yielding place to new " and a people fulfil its ideal in many ways. Thus caste system and nationalism cannot subsist side by side. The one gradually dies and makes way for the other but in theory there can be no objection against innocent caste habits if they in no way hinder the fulfilment of nationalism. If a person will not suffer caste distinction to influence him in public conduct, will give justice irrespective of the caste of the parties, will not show preference to candidates in making a public appointment on the score of his caste, and thus in a thousand and one ways behave patriotically in the common interests of the country one may not object to the observance of caste distinctions by him. What then is the good or the advantage of the caste under these circumstances any way? But it is because experience in the past is universally contrary to the theoretical position of Mr. Kelkar that the whole rub comes in. To us it is unthinkable that a good communalist in the orthodox sense can be in the same breath a devout nationalist. We have yet to come across such a wonderful creature, steeped in caste prejudices and yet otherwise conducting himself patriotically.

Mr. Kelkar passes from caste differences to religious differences. The former are social while the latter are individual. In Europe a Catholic of a country keeps social intercourse with his Protestant brother. There are inter-marriages and socially there is no change in the relation. The Europeans have advanced in knowledge and their culture and society are different from ours. They are not influenced by the religious prejudices either in the social or political sphere to such an extent as we are. Neither is there in their social relations, narrow social exclusiveness as in our own. The Europeans, the Arabs, and the Turks have further learnt to differentiate between secular and spiritual interests. We have not yet reached that stage. We are afraid, Mr. Kelkar, with all his special advocacy has not succeeded in reconciling the old caste outlook, with its narrowness, with all its bitter rivalries and jealousies which have not ceased to exist even yet, and the modern ideal of nationalism, with its harmonious blending of castes and creeds and requiring higher education, training, and culture.

We have already said that the caste hatred was but a minor mediate cause of the decline and fall of the Maratha Empire. Our remarks must have made clear that this problem is a social one and in the then existing social conditions it was not possible for the Marathas to change it or ever to think of changing it. The Brahmins did not deliberately betray their country owing to their caste rivalry for after all, as Stephen says, " The persons in authority are the product of a certain social condition and are determined by whatever determines the society." The odium, therefore, of the fall of the Maratha Empire must be borne by the whole society. It is to be specially regretted that the Brahmins in course of time degenerated as a class, for it has cost the whole community dearly. Their fall from their ancient high heritage of spiritual and intellectual leadership left the Maratha society ignorant and incapable of thinking for itself and therefore helpless at the mercy of the English. There were no real Brahmins to guide the nation by their superior minds; and the Brahmins of those days were so far as knowledge and education—the two essential forces in a society which keep it in a living condition—were concerned were in no way better than other classes. We do not mean to blame them for what was really a historically natural result of the social evolution of the Hindu race.

IV. *The Feudal System and its Fatal Results—Decay of Monarchy—Want of a Strong Central Authority—Decay of the Army*

In the final struggle with the English the weakness of the Maratha Empire was brought to the forefront in two particulars, viz. (1) the absence of a strong central power[39] and (2) the degeneration of the army, and both these facts may be regarded as the two important and immediate causes of the fall of the Maratha Empire. Had it been possible to continue and strengthen the strong national Monarchy of Shivaji the Great the Sirdars could not have been as powerful as they grew to be under the rule of the Peshwas and the consequent fatal results could have been avoided. The English would have been forced to lie in wait for another suitable opportunity to carry out their plan of aggrandisement. Baji Rao II threw himself in the arms of the English because of the attempts of the ambitious Sirdars—Doulatrao Shinde and Jaswantrai Holkar—to control the Central Government at Poona and to make the Peshwa's Government subservient to themselves. The inevitable tendency of feudalism to look upon the King as the first among equals had asserted itself as the central Monarchy had lost its vigour and strength. The Monarchy had deteriorated into poliarchy. Again a strong central authority would have been able to unite all the feudatory chiefs under the national banner and the chances of success against the English would have considerably improved. The weakness of the central authority was due to the decay of Monarchy and the emergence of feudal system.

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[39] It was not merely the absence of central authority as suggested by Khare and Kelkar—Introduction to *Marathe Va Ingraj*, pp. 11-12; and *Marathe Va Ingraj*, Part II, p. 23. The Peshwa succeeded to the central power of the King and they were accepted as such by other Sirdars, who showed the respect outwardly at least on that score. Successions to the provincial *gadis* were regulated by the Peshwa and the Sirdars used to make nazars on that occasion. The Peshwa used to command their army. The legal and constitutional position of the Peshwa was exactly that of the King. They were *de facto* sovereigns. It is another thing that several events weakened their authority.

Under Shivaji the Great, the national Monarchy was strong but the Great King was succeeded by weak men. Neither Sambhaji nor Rajaram inherited his father's genius and during the latter's reign as Regent the Jahagirdari system was introduced for the first time after its abolition by Shivaji the Great. Hereditary fiefs were granted to the military leaders as an inducement to undertake the conquest of the Mughal territory. We have already seen how Shivaji the Great was very particular in not granting such hereditary fiefs. Within twenty years of his death his military reforms also were discarded and the strict discipline of the army was relaxed.

The decline of the Monarchy which began in Sambhaji's reign steadily continued under Rajaram and Shahu and thus the feudal barons got an excellent opportunity to consolidate their position. They exploited to the full the civil war between Shahu and Tara Bai to advance their personal interests and extorted from the irresolute Shahu big Jahagirs as a price of their support to his cause. The feudal system took root because of another circumstance. Balaji Vishwanath, Peshwa, secured from the Emperor the grant of Chowth and Sardeshmukhi rights in the Deccan. For the collection of these taxes again the agency of the Sirdars was used. The feudal barons were to collect Chowth from the territories assigned to them; they could if they liked extend their activities further in their immediate neighbourhood. They were only required to make a fixed contribution to the royal treasury and to meet the expenses of some of the royal establishments. They were left to exercise sovereign authority without any interference from the Raja within their respective fiefs. This system was expected to provide for peace at home and expansion abroad. The only check—that too not an effective one—was that their civil establishments were appointed from headquarters; otherwise for all practical purposes the feudal barons became independent princes. The King was henceforth not to trouble himself about the finances for military campaigns. The Sardeshmukhi and Babti were to meet all his private needs. Thus the feudalisation of the Army and the State was complete.

Shahu was not a capable ruler and lacked military talent. Naturally his new forward policy of territorial expansion had to be entrusted to the more able hands of his Peshwa, Baji Rao, and his brilliant successes in the field made the rise of the Peshwas possible. The result was that the decline of Monarchy went one step further and under the imbecile Ram Raja it became complete. Both these factors made the central authority weak.

The defects of feudalism now began to manifest themselves. It made unity of command impossible and created hereditary commands by postulating hereditary genius. It transferred civil administration to military officers who were not necessarily qualified for such work and as a result even military efficiency suffered. In theory the Senapati was still the Commander-in-chief but in practice the Peshwa supplanted him.

The system led to conflicts which it was expected to avoid. The Peshwa fought with the Senapati, the Dabhades rendered no service to the State as genius was not hereditary, the Gaikwads and the Bhonsles were not favourable to the Peshwa and the latter found it necessary to trespass on their special spheres of influence. The Peshwas did not learn the lesson from this failure of the system and as the Empire expanded, they also created new fiefs on the old lines. The Sirdar obtained a Saranjam in lieu of his stipulated service and though the Peshwa did not look upon the old chiefs who held their fiefs directly from the King with a kindly eye, the number of Saranjams they created was enormous.[40]

The burden of civil administration and military defence of the major portion of the Empire was thrown on these fief-holders whose interests were expected to be identical with those of the State. They were to work a simple, ready-made scheme and a number of Darakdars or civil officers whom they could not dismiss, were sent to see that they kept to the line laid down by the Peshwa Government. But the Sirdars followed their own interests and the Darakdars could be easily bribed and the stipulated force was generally not maintained. Their men were not paid according to the scale laid down by the Peshwa and the number and value of their horses were in most cases below the required standard.[41] This unsatisfactory state of affairs was the result of combining into the hands of the Saranjam holder both the civil and military functions. Whenever he was called upon to join an expedition with the quota of his army, he had always to contract a loan as there was seldom any ready money with him. It was a vicious circle. Military needs affected the efficiency of the civil administration and the inefficiency of the Civil government reacted disastrously upon military efficiency. Shinde and Holkar had to raise money by mortgaging the future revenues of their provinces and selling Governorships to their creditors.[42] Even these temporary expedients did not postpone the final disaster and there came a day when the great chiefs found themselves unable to meet the just demands of the soldiers on the one hand and to render any satisfactory account of their revenues to the Supreme Government, on the other. On one occasion Shinde had to submit accounts for seven years together and it was found that the papers had not been properly kept.[43] The financial difficulties of Holkar led to the gradual dissolution of his army. In extreme cases an improvident chief sometimes failed even to render any military service or to pay compensation for it in cash and such delinquencies often went unpunished.[44] Once the feudal system was re-established, the proverbial love of vatan of the Marathas rendered any effective military reform impossible.

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[40] A list drawn up in 1811-12 gives no less than sixty Saranjamdars excluding the powerful Sirdars of Central India like the Shinde, the Holkar, the Powar, and the Bhonsle—See *Itihas Sangraha, Peshwa Dapatarantil Nivadak Kagadpatra*, p. 46; also Sane: *Patre, Yadi, Vagaire*, pp. 547-48.

Several attempts were made to reduce defiant chiefs to submission as when Baji Rao I defeated Trimbakrao Dabhade and Damaji Gaikwad was defeated by Nana Saheb. In the former case Shahu's soft character stood in the way of the Dabhade's being deprived of their fiefs after Dabhai. In the latter, the

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[41] See *Peshwa Diaries*, Vol. IX, pp. 310-14.

[42] Several examples of this practice have been given in *Itihas Sangraha*, Vol. II, pp. 110 & 240.

[43] Sane: *Patre, Yadi, Vagaire*, p. 318.

[44] For example see *Itihas Sangrah*, Vol. II, pp. 84 and 92.

Peshwa's usurpation of the central power in the State prevented any drastic action against Damaji, though it was in the interest of the State. Nana Saheb was a Brahmin and if he tried to crush the Gaikwad, other Maratha Sirdars would have been alarmed and they would have all combined to oppose the Peshwa at a time when his usurpation was not yet secure. Nana Saheb therefore must have thought it prudent to temporize. The Peshwa's Government was legally the central authority but it was not the same as the King's Government and hence did not command the prestige and loyalty due to the old Monarchy which it superseded. The Peshwa was regarded more or less as one of their ranks and in this conflict with the Sirdars or the Military chiefs he had to rely upon his Brahmin adherents if he was at all to keep up his supremacy. These supporters had to be rewarded with rich fiefs as in the past and became the founders of new families. At first their gratitude made them loyal but the next generation copied the baneful example of their master. The Peshwa continued to multiply fiefs and the chiefs of various Maratha principalities rewarded their immediate supporters in a like manner.

Thus the natural result was that events tended to establish more firmly the fundamentally erroneous system into the body politic.

Another device by which the Peshwas tried to guard themselves against the disloyalty of the vassal chiefs was to foment their mutual jealousy. Shinde and Holkar, the two powerful pillars of the Maratha Empire, were jealous of each other's power since the feudal system fostered individual tendencies. The Policy of the Peshwa Government was to effect a breach and to keep it open in their own personal interests. This is not all. Quarrels between brothers of the same family for succession were also exploited. Thus they encouraged enmity between Manaji and Sambhaji Angre, Govindrao and Fatte Singh Gaikwad and Sabaji and Mudhoji Bhonsle. This policy recoiled on its originators like a boomerang when the feudatories in their turn exploited the family dissensions of the Peshwa. When the central authority at Poona was weakened by civil wars Shinde, Holkar, and Bhonsle did not fail to aggrandize their power at its expense. Thus the decline of Monarchy and the rise of the Peshwas led to the atrophy of the central power in the

Empire; the clash of the interests of the Brahmin Peshwa and the Maratha war-lords gave rise to mutual suspicions and jealousies in the State; and the military strength of the Empire decayed, as a military power based on suspicion and jealousy cannot last long. And all these fatal results followed from the want of capacity, both civil and military, in the successors of Shivaji the Great and the re-introduction of the feudal system. Of course we do not in the least blame the Peshwas. It was not their fault that they were the ablest Marathas of their times and at the same time Brahmins by caste. The caste system of the Hindus, in its then degenerate form, created caste-prejudices and these were added to the personal rivalries fostered by the tendencies of feudalism. Thus under the social conditions of those times everything happened in a historically natural course. Further the Peshwas at least sustained the languishing fortunes of the Maratha Empire under the weak Bhonsles, the descendants of Shivaji the Great, for many generations and thus brought glory to the Maratha Nation.

Feudalism was not the only evil from which the Marathas suffered. As the Empire grew in magnitude and splendour they gradually lost the early impulse, the original ideal of Shivaji the Great. Circumstances had immensely changed since the days of the Great King. The Marathas were now expanding into an Imperial Nation and Baji Rao's idea was to found a Hindu Empire. He had to win over to the Maratha side, if their Imperial ambitions were to be easily realised, the Hindus of the Central and Northern India. He could not, like Shivaji, appeal to the racial sentiments of the Marathas. The ideal of Swarajya or a National State as propounded by Shivaji the Great was widened in its scope but the national sentiment was correspondingly weakened. Bapi Rao's ideal of a Hindupad-Padashahi was the only noble ideal under the circumstances as we have noticed in another chapter. But it tended to develop, as the Empire grew, other tendencies as well. Baji Rao I had enough imagination and idealism and he was welcomed by the Rajputs as a deliverer. His wars against the Siddis and the Portuguese were also in the cause of Hinduism and had in some measure their origin in the persecution of the Hindus. The lover of Mastani knew how to appeal to the religious sentiments of the people, although he could scarcely be considered an orthodox Brahmin.

In orthodoxy and diplomacy Nana Saheb was perhaps his father's superior but as a statesman and soldier he was much inferior to Baji Rao I. He deliberately abandoned the pan-Hindu policy of his father.[45] A policy of annexation which Baji Rao I pursued in Malwa and Konkan did not, like the same policy of Wellesley, yield immediate financial profits. In the beginning it was expensive and required patience to make it paying in the end. The Marathas, however, looked upon war as a normal source of revenue. It was a good policy in the hands of Shivaji the Great who was forced by his scanty resources to undertake annual expeditions of Mulukhgiri. But Nana Saheb could have very well developed his finances by paying patient attention to the natural resources of the large dominions under his rule. Shivaji the Great was not building up an Empire and fought against the Muslims. Nana Saheb had to manage an Empire and to deal with the friendly Rajputs. Changed circumstances required changed policy. The Peshwa, therefore, was wrong in thinking that in making war pay for war he was a disciple of the Great King. Baji Rao I had always suffered from financial bankruptcy and his letters to Brahmendra Swami clearly indicated how much he was harrassed by his creditors.[46] When Nana Saheb was obliged to find money to pay off Shahu's debts, he abandoned the annexation policy and along with it went the pan-Hindu idea. His Newai expedition was for money and the main purpose of his numerous other expeditions was to bring the currents of gold from the North and the South to the lake of Poona. This policy, whatever its monetary gains, led to the wholesale alienation of the Hindu allies of the Empire and the thorough denationalisation of the Maratha Army. The Rajputs were systematically plundered and though in the beginning they had welcomed the rule of the Marathas as the rule of their Hindu Brethren, they were soon convinced that the Maratha supremacy meant for them nothing better than a change of masters and for the matter of that a change for the worse. This result of the short-sighted policy deprived the Marathas of the valuable help of the Rajputs in the hour of their urgent need in the Panipat campaign. Nor were these the only effects of the selfish policy of plunder.

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[45] Sen: *Military System of the Marathas*, p. 70.
[46] Rajwade, Vol. III, pp. 20-21.

It caused disunion and dissension within the Maratha Empire. Hard pressed for money Nana Saheb did not hesitate to sell his assistance to the Nabob of Bengal against another Sirdar of the Empire, Raghuji Bhonsle. He also took the English help against Angre. Similarly Madhavrao made common cause with the Nizam against Janoji Bhonsle. When Raghoba sought foreign help to secure the Peshwaship he had at least these precedents before him. The example of Nana Saheb was followed by Shinde and Holkar and they took opposite sides in the disputes of the Rajput princes. In their case also personal gain was the object. Had Nana Saheb been actuated by the larger interests of the Nation and had his own conduct been above reproach he could have easily done justice to the Rajputs by siding with the party whose cause was good. Thus day by day pursuit of a common policy in the sole interests of the Empire became impossible. So long as the Peshwas were able themselves they could at least retain the loyalty of the Sirdars but after the death of Madhavrao when the chief power came to be concentrated in the hands of Nana Fadnavis even that semblance of respect for the Peshwa's authority vanished. The result was the central authority for these various reasons gradually became weak.

As regards the army the bulk of it consisted of feudal levies but the Peshwa had an additional force of his own. The change in the political outlook and political ideal naturally affected this personal force. Shivaji the Great aimed at a Maratha State and his army was a National Army in which the Marathas formed the main element. Baji Rao's army continued to be, in the main, Maratha in its composition. But Nana Saheb's policy of causing the two rivers of gold from the South and the North to flow into Poona required constant fighting and a vast army. The Marathas were averse to spend the whole year away from their homes and Nana Saheb enlisted foreign mercenaries.

Sikhs, Rajputs, Sindhis, Karnatakis, Rohillas, Arabs, Abyssynians, and Portuguese—all were welcomed in his army. These more unscrupulous and less faithful foreigners were better paid though they were by no means better soldiers.[47] The Maratha army thus came to be gradually denationalised.[48] Shivaji's national army was feudalised by Rajaram and Shahu, and denationalised by the Peshwa, Shinde, and Holkar. In Shivaji's times the infantry preponderated over the cavalry.[49] In 1707 Dhanaji Jadhav had under his command a strong infantry force of 25,000 while his cavalry numbered 5,000 only.[50] During the Peshwa period the position was reversed and the cavalry was more numerous, as the same was more suitable owing to its great speed for plundering raids.

Tone tells us that in his days the Marathas did not care to enlist as a foot soldier and the infantry consisted almost entirely of foreigners. These troops were generally armed with all sorts of weapons like muskets and matchlocks, swords and largets, spears and lances, daggers and clubs, bows and arrows. Not encumbered with much baggage the Marathas were remarkable for their celerity but their chief defect was the want of discipline.[51] In Shivaji's time the army had no Pindaris but by the time of Nana Saheb the Pindaris became a common feature of the Maratha force, though they were non-combatants. During the Peshwa period most of the parts were mainly garrisoned by Arabs and other foreigners. So in spite of their great natural strength it offered a feeble resistance to the English armies when they finally conquered Baji Rao's Kingdom. Since the days of Shivaji the Great the artillery of his forts also was neglected and thus they were no longer the strength of Maharashtra and the English encountered no serious difficulty in occupying the country. During the march the Marathas emulated the splendours of the Muslim nobility of the North and as the Empire could now provide the means of indulging in their new taste for comfort and ease there was laxity of discipline quite unknown in Shivaji's times. The Great King never permitted any woman in his Camp but in the later days the Maratha Camp was full of them. At Panipat the army had been hampered in its movement by the presence of the Family Ladies of the Peshwa and the other officers but the lesson was soon forgotten and a large number of women and non-combatants like Pindaris was to be found in the Camps of Raghoba, Daulatrao Shinde, Parshuram Bhau Patwardhan, and other Generals.[52] The Camps were further encumbered by large number of useless animals which could be fed with difficulty and which rendered the whole camp insanitary.[53] The Maratha Generals had no Commissariat Department and for their supplies they depended on the forages and Brinjaras. Like Aurangzeb's Camps the Maratha Camps under the later Peshwas resembled a city where commercial and other transactions were daily contracted in large volume. The Camp was not free from the undesirable attention of the Creditors[54] who would sit in Dharna at the tent of the Officers. No man whatever his rank was immune from it; Hari Pant Phadke, Shinde, Holkar and even the Peshwa had been subjected to this last method of the Creditors. All these weaknesses were not known to the hardy warriors of Shivaji the Great. We do not think that the Marathas would have saved themselves from their final overthrow by simply keeping to his institutions as they were under him. Without improvements in several directions, it would not have been perhaps impossible for the Marathas to hold their own against the English but there can be no doubt that there was a serious departure from his spirit and that there is much truth in Ranade's remark when he says, " The Confederacy broke chiefly because Shivaji's successors departed from the lines of policy laid down by him for their guidance."[55]

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[47] Orme: *Military Transactions in Indostan*, Vol. I, p. 81.

[48] For the details of the composition of the armies of the Peshwa, Shinde, and Holkar refer to Tone: *Illustrations of Some Institutions of the Maratha People*, p. 44. G. R. Glaig: *Life of Sir Thomas Munro*, Vol. I, p. 494, footnote. *Maheshwar Darbarchin Batmi Patrem*, Vol. I, pp. 10-11, Vol. II, pp. 40, 117, 121.

[49] Sen: *Military System of the Marathas*, p. 76.

[50] Scott: *History of the Deccan*, Vol. II, p. 116.

[51] *Illustration of some Institutions of the Maratha People*, p. 44. The details as to their recruitment from time to time and conditions of service are given in *Peshwa Diaries*, Vol. I, p. 124; Vol. III, pp. 165, 176, 178; Vol. IX pp. 336-37; Vol. VI, p. 193.

This brief sketch will show that the Marathas had travelled far away from the ideals, civil institutions, and the spirit of national patriotism of the days of Shivaji the Great. The Great King's State policy was anti-feudal and anti-hereditary. He had tried his utmost to undo the evils of feudalism by depriving the old Deshmukhs and Deshpandes of some of their old obnoxious prerogatives, by putting down fortified castles of the petty jahagirdars, by not creating any new fiefs, and by appointing his officers during his Majesty's pleasure. His armies had won victories over the Mughals, the Portuguese, the Bijapuris, and the Hyderabadis by their superior discipline, superior leadership, greater hardihood, and higher mobility. But why the Maratha with his inveterate love of his land had submitted to his iron will was that Shivaji the Great had held before him the political ideal of national independence and preservation of his Dharma. His high moral character, his selfless devotion to the cause, and his steadfastness of efforts to achieve it disarmed the opposition of the selfish men who were perhaps inclined to have their own line against him. Self-sacrificing himself, he did not hesitate to enforce at the point of his sword strict discipline on those selfish barons who opposed his ideal by remaining in the foreigner's service and by fighting against their own countrymen. But his ideal died with him for his successors abandoned his path and in reviving feudalism they took the first step in the wrong direction. Feudal institutions fostered selfish individualist tendencies which, in their turn, produced dissensions and personal rivalries; the moral tone of the society vanished, the discipline of the army became a thing of the past, and plunder became its chief ideal; society degenerated and all was decay and decline.

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[52] Tone: *Institutions of the Maratha People*, p. 58. Broughton: *Letters from a Maratha Camp*, p. 22.

[53] *Itihas Sangrah*, Vol. II, p. 250. (*Mahashwar Darbarche Batmi Patra.*)

[54] Many instances in Broughton's letter and Khare's *Adhikari Yag*.

[55] *Rise of the Maratha Power*, p. 142.

Why did the Marathas then adopt such an injurious system? Shivaji's ideal was far in advance of his times. Maratha society was not organically ripe for his noble reforms. There were no social institutions to retain the intellectual conquests of the greatest of its Hero and naturally the evil social tendencies which had been kept under control by the will of one man, returned at the first favourable opportunity. If ideals are new, persistent propaganda must be made and the ideals must be established on a broad bottom or they vanish with their author. Some effect is of course left behind and Shivaji's spirit lived for some generations. Modern ideals will not thrive in medieval environment and no attempt had been made to change the social feelings so as to bring them into harmony with the particular principles. Shivaji the Great had merely tried to impose his ideas from above and no wonder he failed. The question why feudalism returned with all its evils which some members of the society could see but were powerless to prevent, is thus a social problem. Social forces were at a standstill and as the lofty principles of Shivaji the Great were not assimilated on a large scale the contemporary men were only guided by familiar ideas. The Englishmen in India in the beginning were affected by their Indian surroundings and there was corruption and bribery among the Company's Officers. But the English society was shocked and Clive was sent back as Governor of Bengal to cure the disease. The English " Nabobs " became a hateful sight to English society and were not tolerated long. Social institutions like feudalism have their roots in the social forces.

V. *Abandonment of " National Tactics "*

Several writers say that the Marathas were defeated by the English because they had abandoned their national tactics or the guerilla method of warfare. They believe that if their time-honoured practice had been followed the Marathas would have been successful. In their opinion it was wrong that the Marathas raised trained infantry and used guns. It is said, " The whole attempt of the native powers to imitate the military methods of Europe proved a delusion and a snare."[56]

Let us briefly examine this line of argument. In the first place we must clear a preliminary point. There are no such traits as " National " especially in matters external. It is always taken for granted that certain forms of society and government, certain habits of thought, certain manners, etc. are " oriental " or " National ". If we examine this question it will be found that what is considered a permanent characteristic of the " East " or of a particular nation, is nothing more than the outward manifestation of the Asiatic society or of that particular national group at that particular period of their social evolution. There can be no fixed methods of doing things or fixed viewpoints of looking at things because knowledge and science change these " fixed traits " every now and then in the light of new experience, and knowledge and science are not the exclusive possessions of any particular nation or group. If this theory is carried to its logical conclusion we must say that the Japs ought not to have used " western " methods in their war with the Russians; that Turkey, Persia, China, Japan ought to have stuck to their medieval culture; that the Hindus, to remain " National ", must not learn anything " modern " or " western " since it must conflict with their medieval characteristics; that the Marathas must always remain predatory in their habits and so on and so forth. Modern Asiatic nations have completely exploded this habit of thinking. In the evolution of a nation so much has to be discarded which was once considered " National ". A new system comes into existence and drives out an old one from the field because the former is found to be better from experience. Even national traits based upon " National character " are slowly changed. But the process is necessarily slow as human character changes but gradually. It cannot be said that a particular system of warfare is " National " because it was used with great success by a particular nation in the past or at the particular stage of its development. The Marathas may have used *guerilla tactics* with devastating effect to Aurangzeb's grand army but under changed circumstances they had to change their military methods or these writers would again turn round and say that the Marathas were defeated because they did not change their methods. Suppose the Marathas had not been conquered and they had continued to be the masters of India to the present times, suppose further that they are called upon to make war on another nation, what methods should they use? Should they use their " National " tactics or should they resort to western methods as being more scientific and more effective? If the answer is that the Marathas should use modern methods of warfare like the Japs, would a writer be justified in saying, in case the Marathas lose the war, that they were defeated because they abandoned their " National " tactics? It would be foolish to argue in that fashion. The Germans were defeated in the last world war, not because they did not practise Fredrick the Great's " National " tactics but because of other causes. The question is did the Marathas commit an unpardonable sin in adopting the new method? Our reply is that they did not. The opinion under discussion is indirectly based upon what the writers consider to be the lesson of Panipat. But Panipat does not prove that the Marathas were defeated because of the trained battalions of Ibrahim Khan Gardi. The defeat of Panipat is chiefly the triumph of superior generalship. In spite of the bad gunnery of the Gardis, they completely baffled the mailed horsemen of Durani. The value of French discipline was seen when the armies closed and a hand to hand fight ensued. "Having defeated the attack of the Persian cavalry Ibrahim turned upon the Rohillas with such effect that 8,000 of them were quickly disposed of; and for three hours the Gardis held the field."[57] Keene[58] further remarks that the result would have been the same all along the line if all the Maratha infantry had been like that. Keene says, "The mailed horsemen of the Durani had utterly destroyed the southern army in spite of the gallant efforts of Ibrahim Khan Gardi. It must therefore strike us as a strong mark of clearness and originality that Sindhia should have been able to pick the truth from such confusing medium and see that Ibrahim's overthrow proved nothing against the system."[59] Sadashivrao Bhau himself had decided to rely upon the trained infantry and his guns as a result of his experience. Those who blame him in this behalf do so from their cowardly habit of saying any and everything bad about a defeated person. Bhau, though defeated, was a good general; he possessed many qualities that gave promise of a great future. Had not his beautiful sense of honour impelled him deliberately to sacrifice his life on the field, he would have perhaps wiped out the disgrace of the defeat. At any rate we do not consider the weak Raghoba, the alternative general who would have ordinarily commanded at Panipat to be a better soldier. Whatever may be Bhau's other faults he had decision of character and it was by his courage and confidence that the Maratha army, which had been demoralised by the previous defeats of Shinde and Holkar, could be brought at least to face the Afghans.

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[56] Lyall: *British Dominion in India*, p. 227.

Sadashivrao Bhau had perhaps learnt the value of European guns and discipline from his father Chimaji Appa who believed from experience of his own wars with the Portuguese, that the strength of an army lay in its infantry and guns. He had seen the effects of guns and disciplined troops in southern campaigns. The Victor of Udgir had been convinced of the terrible effect of European artillery and discipline. Even before this the exploits of Dupleix, Bussy, Clive, and others had been well known. Mahadaji Shinde had been impressed with the value of the new system[60] in Goddards's campaign in 1779. He had appreciated the "majesty with which the British soldier fights". In spite of the English defeat at Talegaon Mahadaji said to a British Officer, "What soldiers you have! Their line is like a brick wall; and when one falls another steps into the gap."[61] Thus when Mahadaji was convinced of the necessity of disciplined corps he raised several regiments under the supervision of De Boigne. "Accordingly while retaining the twofold organisation of the cavalry he reduced that force to a governable condition; while he established a body of infantry which with a due proportion of guns should give consolidation and steadiness to the army."[62] The Marathas were no longer in their infancy as a nation; they had expanded into an Imperial Power and irregular cavalry alone could surely not have served their vast interests.

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[57] H. G. Keene: *Madhava Rao Sindhia*, p. 42.
[58] *Ibid*, p. 152.
[59] *Ibid*, p. 227.

Now let us see what the effect of these disciplined troops of Shinde was in the actual warfare. De Boigne's veterans covered themselves with glory in wars. In Shinde's war against the Rajputs, Mahadaji's new troops distinguished themselves and proved their worth against the fiery charges of the Rathors. In spite of the headlong valour of the Rajputs, science and discipline asserted themselves and the day of heavy cavalry was over. Patan, Merta, Lalsat, and Lakheri bear ample testimony to the utility of the new system and the wisdom of adopting it.

The Peshwa had seen the effect in his wars with Tippu and events had forced him to raise such troops. The Holkar family had always been opposed to the new method, yet they were forced to raise troops on the new model. Then again Jaswantrai Holkar, the Rajputs, and the Pindaris used the "National" tactics but they did not succeed in the end. On the contrary it is asserted by Sir Richard Temple that the drill and discipline which the foreigners had introduced caused the native resistance to the British forces to be stiffer than it would otherwise have been on several well-fought fields.[63]

Thus the adoption of the new system was the natural result

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[60] *Ibid*, p. 197.

[61] Keene: *Hindustan under the Free Lances*, p. 10.

[62] Keene: *Madhav Rao Sindhia*, p. 30.

[63] Preface to Kneene's *Hindusthan under the Free Lances*, p. xv.

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of their experience and the necessity of the times. If the system did not succeed against the enemies of the Marathas, we must not attribute it to the policy of change itself but to the peculiar social conditions of the Marathas which made its successful working impossible in practice. Want of education in the Marathas themselves forced them to employ European experts who were mere adventurers and who never looked to their master's interests. The situation was that the Marathas could not have learnt the science themselves as they did not possess at that time the requisite educational and intellectual qualifications but all the same they could not have done without the new system. Had the Maratha armies continued their traditional or "National" methods they might have given more trouble to Wellesley and to Lake but in any case it seems certain that the English would have ultimately prevailed. The mistake of the Marathas does not lie in their change of military methods. They neglected their cavalry and tried to hybridise the two systems. With the inferior calibre of their Generals, with their degenerated horsemen, with disunity in their ranks, and with the army denationalised, the Marathas could not have succeeded in the struggle with English even if the "National tactics" had been used. Among other defects we must also mention the want of fiery national enthusiasm of the days of Shivaji the Great or the War of Independence in the Marathas of Baji Rao II's time. Evidently there was a moral decay. The fate of nations is commonly decided by field battles in which cavalry plays a subordinate part but which are won mainly by infantry.[64] How can Hindupad-Padashahi be either built up or maintained by guerilla foragers? The fault of the Marathas lay in not mastering the new military science and the new tactics—and this was impossible for the ill-educated and crude Marathas of those days.

VI. *Minor or Accidental Causes—Play of Chance—Destiny*

We shall now briefly dispose of certain minor causes which are sometimes advanced to explain such a grand phenomenon as the fall of the Maratha Empire.

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[64] Colonel Denison: *A History of Cavalry*, p. 188.

(a) *There was no Law of Succession*: Firstly, we think that the Marathas did not possess the necessary self-discipline to accept any law as final and to obey the same loyally. Self-interest was always a stronger motive force and in the absence of strong coercive State organs it would have prevailed in the Maratha society. So long as selfish persons were available in abundance to sell their support to any claimant whatever his legal title, so long there could not be any civil peace. For example even if Shivaji the Great had bequeathed the kingdom by a will to Rajaram because of Sambhaji's cruel and vicious nature, Sambhaji could have easily asserted his right to the throne as he actually did. In case the succession has been decided by law in favour of the eldest son, still Shahu's right would have been disputed by Tara Bai. Tara Bai got enough followers to be able to establish a separate kingdom and thus to divide the Maratha sovereignty. If Sambhaji had assumed Kingship by the law of primogeniture the old ministers would have tried to raise some fiction to dethrone him. Thus whatever the actual law of succession or whatever the wishes of the late monarch, Sambhaji and Shahu would not have been allowed to succeed without their right being disputed by rival claimants. The reason why the Prince of Wales has succeeded in recent times his father regularly without any trouble is that the law of succession in England is strictly enforced by the law courts of the realm. If any other person were to try to usurp the throne he would not receive public support and he would be captured and sentenced according to law. But if he could find sufficient number of adherents to his cause, it would still be possible for him to create civil unrest. It is a social question which depends on the strength of a society. If there is a large number of law-abiding citizens, the society is good; if not, it is bad.

Secondly, Hindu law divided property among sons equally and hence people did not feel competent to judge between the respective rights of parties. Even if the legal title is not good the weak-kneed Hindu would yet retain some soft corner for a rival claimant for other reasons. Sternness in carrying out legitimate ideals or an obviously good policy is unthinkable in the case of most Hindus; indeed the Hindus have degenerated to such a low depth of human weakness that strictness of any sort has become foreign to the character of the "mild" Hindu.

(b) *The English ought not to have been allowed to trade with the Maratha Kingdom*: This argument can only be urged by men who are wise after the event. It is similar to the argument that a child ought not have been born because the parents cannot control him through their own weakness. There was no reason in the beginning to foresee that the Europeans were socially superior and were going to be the masters of India in course of time. If nothing was done to prevent the gradual spread of their power after their ambitions became known, how could their secret intentions have been countered by refusing to enter into trade relations with them? There is no harm in allowing foreigners to trade with your country provided you are strong enough to punish effectively the slightest infringement of your sovereignty at their hands. The general level of knowledge, the love of European commodities, and the unsettled conditions of the country were, however, such as not to warrant that policy. If their entry into this country had been prevented as suggested above they might have thrust their presence on Indians either by force or in some other manner. Only a weak society can think of such a cowardly measure and a weak society can be easily overcome whatever the particular method.

(c) *English help ought not to have been taken*: The sentiments of the medieval Marathas in regard to the foreigners were different from those of modern men. It was not considered wrong, as it befitted a medieval society, either to serve under the enemies of one's country or to accept their help against one's own people. Nana Saheb and Raghoba and Baji Rao II sought the help of the English because they were influenced more by their selfish ends than by interests of their country. Ignorant men cannot foresee the full consequences of their actions. Perhaps it is useless to expect patriotism from medieval men. This, too, is a matter of social education, and social solidarity for patriotism is a social virtue and backward communities have always been found wanting in that essentially modern sentiment. Under the highly developed English society quarrels, if any, could not be carried too far and they were patriotic not to call in foreign aid. Thus in the personal quarrels between Hastings and Philip Francis no foreign power could intervene. Neither did any English officer serve under the Maratha banner against the flag of his country. Of course they were allowed to accept service under the Marathas for the Governor-General must have known that such a course ultimately strengthened their own national cause. We believe under exactly similar conditions the Marathas would have not only fought against their country's flag, but they would have fought with zest. Such is always the nature of quarrels in a feudal society. The fact is India in those days was a "geographical expression". As there was no India there could be no foreigners.

(d) *Lack of organisation,* want of patriotism, dependence on others, selfishness, and other deficiencies referred to by some writers as causes are social drawbacks which proceed form want of advanced social environment which is the result of political and social experience of a community. In modern societies these defects are not found because their inherited experience and acquired knowledge are high and these work in practice as preventives to these natural tendencies. These characteristics again are not in any sense "National"[65] but they are products of the ignorance of a medieval society. In the middle ages the same social failings were to be met with in European society. If they were absent in the English society of the 18th and the 19th centuries, such absence was due to their social progress. It was by that time a modern society.

(e) *Science neglected*: *No Love of Knowledge*: Love of science or knowledge is present in any society as a result of higher social development when conscious purposive efforts begin to operate in it. When progressive social forces begin to work, educational and other development is rapid. The English society as a consequence of their social evolution was such a society and hence they made conscious efforts to get the particulars of the Marathas before they attacked them. The Marathas, with their ignorant society, could not realise such a necessity among many other things that they did not realise and therefore did not make any attempt to know their enemy, their strength, their culture, their national defects, their virtues, etc. In the Maratha society conscious development in any direction did not take place and for obvious reasons. How can you expect a spirit of enquiry in a socially backward people like the Marathas? Mr. Sardesai [66] says, "The necessary education and equipment could have been easily acquired and Indian experts trained." We do not agree with the learned historian. Necessary education could not have been acquired "easily" so as to make them experts. If it was so easy why did they not acquire it? What prevented them from becoming experts in manufacturing guns, in learning military science, etc.? We believe the process of making the Marathas experts in western science in all its branches would have been a revolutionary process. They would have had to unlearn many of the things taught to them as traditions and then begin to learn English. By this slow process some men could have acquired in course of years tolerable knowledge but how could they have transmitted such a knowledge to the Maratha society? Through what medium? Would not have that attempt been considered revolutionary? But the fact is the Maratha society in those days did not feel the need of such a drastic step. Why should they learn the foreigner's language especially when they were a free nation? The Marathas probably did not consider themselves inferior in any way to the "Topikars". That fact was brought home to them after they were defeated in their final struggle. Till then nothing happened to disturb their happy self-complacence. The first shock came only with the second and third Maratha wars. But then they were conquered and their kingdom was annexed and nothing more was left for them to do. Even in the 19th century when the English established their schools how many of our modern ancestors took advantage of it? Religious and other prejudices prevented many of our intellectual class from receiving Western Education. If that was the situation towards the end of the 19th century when the need of learning English owing to their subordinate position in the country was imperative, how can we feel sure that the Marathas in the 18th century, when they were free and when there was no need, would have made efforts to master Western Science? The social conditions explain not only their failure to learn science or to acquire knowledge but also the marked difference in the intellectual calibre of the English and Maratha contemporary personalities. False notions about religion were only a part of the whole social spirit and it was backward or non-progressive.

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[65] Mr. Sardesai calls them "national" weakness but we have already pointed out the flaws behind this habit of thinking—See *Main Currents of Maratha History*, p. 166.

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[66] *Main Currents of Maratha History*, p. 162.

(f) *Were the Marathas inferior in Diplomacy?* In the higher techniques of diplomacy the Marathas, lacking modern education were, we think, deficient. They could have easily seen that the English were their real and formidable enemies and their first object ought to have been to form a league against them. Either because they did not realise the danger or because having perceived it they yet did not see their way to make politic concessions, they did not try to conciliate both the other members of the Maratha Confederacy and the foreign Indian powers. They could have temporised with Nizam and Tippu and first tried to get rid of the English as the most dangerous enemy, as the ancient Greeks did against the Persians. Then they could have reduced the power of the other States or could have gradually absorbed the other Indian powers. Such a course was easy if our statesmen and diplomats had but realised the serious danger from the English quarters. It was not enough only to see the diplomatic aims of the English. Higher diplomacy consisted in providing counter measures for it. We do not believe that it was impossible to adopt suitable measures to counteract the plans of the English. But what do we find instead? The Marathas helped the English first to dismember the kingdom of Tippu and then owing to domestic troubles failed to help him when the English overthrew him, drove the Nizam into the arms of the English, and effected no internal adjustment to secure better understanding with the other feudal barons of the Maratha Empire. They played the English game indirectly for the paltry advantage of a few acres of additional land. On the contrary the English diplomats played their cards well. They fully grasped the essential factors of the situation. They knew the Maratha Confederacy to be the strongest, Tippu to be a dangerous foe, and the Nizam a third-rate power. They easily saw that they would be able to get Maratha help without difficulty against Tippu. Once the Poona Durbar accepted their bait the Nizam would perforce follow suit. They, therefore, secured the Marathas as a party to war with Tippu though of course they could have done without the Maratha help. But in order to prevent the Marathas from joining Tippu or from doing other mischief they sacrificed some portion of the ceded districts but got the Poona Durbar to accept their proposal. When Tippu was thus weakened, one day taking advantage of the Maratha preoccupation with their domestic affairs they removed at a stroke Mysore from the field. At the time of the battle of Kharda they excused themselves from helping the Nizam and thus encouraged the Marathas to attack the Nizam. They knew that the Nizam would be in no condition to refuse their subsidiary alliance after his defeat. Accordingly, though immediately after the humiliating peace with the Marathas was signed the Nizam was furious with the English for having let him badly down in the late war, he was forced to accept the English proposal of alliance. Having removed two of the three rivals they finally took the golden opportunity of Baji Rao II's offer and shattered the power of the third also. The Marathas conscious of their strength ought to have courted the Nizam by giving him easy terms but the lure of immediate gain proved too much. Pure Machiavellism without some faithfulness to promises or some reasonableness does not work in politics. If the Marathas had renounced their claims to Chowth on the Nizam, guaranteed his existing kingdom under their own suzereinty and created by their conduct a certain amount of confidence in his mind that they seriously meant to observe the conditions, the Nizam would not have accepted the alliance with the English. The Marathas terrified him too much, and drove him to seek the English help as the last guarantee of the integrity of his small State. The Marathas had aptitude for diplomacy and would have certainly made fine diplomats if they had possessed the same amount of general knowledge of men and affairs as the English had. Looking to the backward Maratha society, they were incapable of taking any long-term view. As matters stood, the English got that advantage over the Marathas which better education and better knowledge always bestow upon those who possess them. This again is a question of society and its cultural level. Diplomatic trickery succeeds in a limited sphere but to look upon the Empire as a game of chess and to trust too much to finesse is not always good, as Sircar remarks.[67]

(g) *Chance, Ikbal or Destiny*: Chance occurrences which are styled by some religious-minded writers as "Ikbal" or "Destiny" or "Will of God" cannot be seriously considered in scientific investigations. They play no prominent part in the history of a nation.[68] They seldom can influence the fortunes of a nation, unless there is already a decay of its vital forces. Premature deaths of Shivaji the Great, Baji Rao I, Madhavrao, Mahadaji, the murder of Narayanrao, suicide of Savai Madhao Rao—these chance events can have, if at all, only a limited negative influence but in a live society they can produce practically no effect. Why did the Marathas not produce other men equal in ability if not superior when their men of "destiny" died? How is it that the absence of Lord Clive and Warren Hastings did not affect in the least the fortunes of the English? How does England produce one after another great statesmen, great soldiers and has not yet ceased to produce them? Did the English nation suffer when Gladstone died? Will it not survive the death of her greatest statesman of today? Why is there no such time in their history where the death of an individual can be said to have seriously affected their growth? What happened to them after Nelson's death? Why did the Marathas suddenly become barren of great men? Even though no great man like Shivaji the Great was born, they produced men and even women who were able to defeat the mighty Mughal Emperor and his grand army. But because their society gradually declined no great man was produced after Nana or Mahadaji. In short in active societies, like the English society, chance occurrences are not noticed and its effect is not even felt. In a decaying society, however, the gap is felt because the dead great man is probably too superior to others in ability and unable to produce great men any longer the people look back upon their dead heroes with regret. An ignorant man always accounts for what he cannot understand by the hypothesis of a miraculous or superhuman agency. But why should a historian take such an aid when there are known and admitted physical causes to explain the fall of the Maratha Empire? The known causes are enough and to spare.

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[67] *Shivaji and His Times*, p. 435.

We have done with our review of the traditional causes of the fall of the Maratha Empire and an attempt has been made to show how they are intimately connected with the Maratha society and its medieval environment. They are, as we have endeavoured to prove, the results of one and the same cause—the *causa causan*—the non-progressive social forces of the Marathas, their stagnant social spirit, their decadent social institutions. If there is one thing which explains why the English were superior to the Marathas it is their superior society and its superior environment. Their higher level of culture, higher level of general knowledge, their superior education, their deeper science, their wonderful inventions and discoveries, their superior social and individual virtues, in fact every other advantage that they enjoyed over their rivals, the Marathas—all these which made them superior to the latter in peace or war, are at bottom the expression of their superior social spirit. They are the outward manifestations of their peculiar culture which has made all these surprising developments possible for them. Their progressive social spirit, resulting as it does in their democratic government, their system of liberal or higher education, their broad outlook on life, their philosophy which keeps the ideal of social good before them, etc.,—all this is the result of their social institutions including of course the political ones, and their environment. Social institutions, being means towards social ends, always change whenever a change is called for by a corresponding change in their social ideals. Similarly their social environment, their social atmosphere—ideas, thoughts, knowledge, philosophy, laws, manners, institutions, literature, culture, art, science, customs, habits, all taken collectively—also change with change in the ideals. These social ideals alter in accordance with external social needs, social aspirations and with social experience. Their social institutions have been so devised as to maintain their progressive social spirit and their social atmosphere is also conducive to its retention in their society intact. The social spirit of a community is closely connected with its social institutions and its environment and both react upon each other. Social institutions, their structure, their environment, etc., taken together mean society.

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[68] Kelkar and Sardesai believe in destiny or chance—See Sardesai: *Main Currents of Maratha History*, p. 169. Kelkar: *Marathe Va Ingraj*, p. 12.

European Society: Progressive

The progressive social spirit of the Europeans has remained so through several centuries but the particular social institutions and their environment have changed from time to time. Of course they have been always improved. We must now examine the question as to why the social spirit of the Europeans has remained progressive for a long time. Why is it progressive? Why not stagment like ours? Similarly we must try to understand why the social spirit of the Hindus is non-progressive, is stagnant. It must be understood that the civilization of European nations has not suddenly come into existence. It is the natural historical evolution of their communities and is the result of centuries. The origin of the modern spirit is the result of particular historical events and particular historical circumstances of the Europeans among whom it first arose and developed. Hence it has been called " European Civilization ". But now in modern times it has become universal. Any nation can have it if it likes and if it can digest it.

Let us now see what the character of European civilization is. What were its original elements? What were the circumstances under which a fresh impetus was given to those elements and how and which particular elements developed as a result? Firstly, what is civilization? Civilization consists of two leading facts: (1) development of society, and (2) development of the individual.[69] Guizot says these two facts are so intimate that there is a necessary connection between the two. They are inseparable. Sooner or later one brings on the other.

In its nature the European civilization is complex, composite, varied. " All forms, all principles of social organization coexist therein; powers spiritual and temporal, elements theocratic, monarchical, aristocratic, democratic; all orders, all social arrangements mingle and press upon one another; there are infinite degrees of liberty, wealth, and influence. These various forces are in a state of continual struggle among themselves yet no one succeeds in stifling the others and taking possession of society. In ancient times at every great epoch, all societies seemed cast in the same mould; it is sometimes pure monarchy, sometimes theocracy or democracy that prevails; but each in its turn prevails completely. Modern Europe presents us with examples of all systems, of all experiments of social organisation; pure or mixed monarchies, theocrasies, republics more or less aristocratic have thus thrived simultaneously one beside the other and notwithstanding their diversity they have all a certain resemblance, a certain family likeness which it is impossible to mistake. In the ideas, sentiments, and literatures of Europe there is the same variety, the same struggle." We must clearly bear in mind this characteristic of European civilization for European society has pregressed as a result of the conflict of different forces. None gets complete mastery over others. For a time one particular element may get predominance but the others also live side by side and struggle for mastery. Thus out of their struggle has arisen the progressive character of European society. The disadvantage of such a composite civilization is, as Guizot points out, that it is inferior in a particular development of the human mind in letters, in the arts, or in the other directions in which it can advance, to corresponding development in ancient civilization. But in the aggregate, European civilization has shown itself incomparably richer than any other; it has displayed at one and the same time many more different developments. Consequently you find that it has existed fifteen centuries and yet it is still in a state of continuous progression. It has never ceased to show progress. Elsewhere the predominance of one principle produced tyranny, in Europe the variety of elements and the state of their constant struggle had produced, as their result, liberty. This fact constitutes a real and an immense superiority.

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[69] F. Guizot: *The History of Civilization in Europe*, pp. 11-16. We are so much indebted to Guizot's learned lectures on the history of civilization in Europe that we do not propose, hereafter, to make individual references. A general reference to his three volumes is requested.

Let us now see the historical development of the European civilization. The Romans transmitted two elements to European civilization: (1) the municipal system, its habits, rules, precedents, the principle of freedom, (2) a general and uniform civil legislation, the idea of absolute power of sacred majesty, of the Emperor, the principle of order and subjection.

But there was formed at the same time in the heart of the Roman society, a society of a very different nature founded upon totally different principles, animated by different sentiments, a society which was about to infuse into modern European society elements of a character wholly different—the Christian Church. The christian church conferred upon European world three grand benefits: (1) presence of a moral influence, (2) the maintenance of a divine law, (3) the separation of the temporal and spiritual powers. Such were the principles of civilization which Europe in the 5th century derived from the Empire and from the Church. It was in this condition that the barbarians found the Roman world at the time of their invasion. The Germans especially brought into the Roman world the spirit of individual liberty, the need, the passion for independence and individuality. The Germans conferred upon European civilization the spirit of liberty, of liberty as the right and property of each individual, master of himself, of his actions and of his fate, so long as he injures no other individual. This is a fact of universal importance for it was unknown to all preceding civilizations in the ancient republics. The public power disposed all things; the individual was sacrificed to the citizen. Man hitherto had always been absorbed in the Church or in the State. In modern Europe alone, has he existed and developed himself on his own account and in his own way, charged no doubt with toils and duties but finding in himself his aim and his right. It is to German (barbarian) manners that we must trace this distinguishing characteristic of the European civilization. The fundamental idea of liberty in Modern Europe came to it from its barbarian conquerors. The second element of civilization that the barbarians brought was military clientship which afterwards gave birth to Feudalism. At the fall of the Roman Empire almost all the fundamental elements which have united in the progressive development of the European civilization were present in European society. Beginning from the fall of the Roman Empire to the commencement of the 10th century the feudal system took possession of European society. Feudalism exerted a great and salutary influence upon the internal development of the individual; it has awakened in men's minds ideas, energetic sentiments, moral requirements, fine developments of character and passion. From social point of view, it was unable to establish either legal order or political guarantees. The right of personal resistance was the only political right which the feudal system caused to assert itself in European society. The influence of feudalism was favourable to the development of the individual, and unfavourable to social order. Now let us see what influence the Church exercised in the European society from the 5th to the 12th century. She carried movement and liberty of spirit in her bosom and the regeneration of the spirit of enquiry was soon felt in Europe. Although occupied in reforming itself, the Church took alarm at the manifestation of this spirit. She at once declared war against these new reformers as they menaced her position. In this epoch, struggle between the clergy and the free-thinkers arose for the first time.

At the same time a movement of a different nature was produced—the movement of the enfranchisement of the boroughs. This movement gave rise in the middle ages to what is known as the third estate. Then came the crusades, the effects of which were the extension of ideas, enfranchisement of mind on the one hand and on the other the aggrandizement of existences and a large sphere opened to activity of all kind. They produced at once a greater degree of individual liberty, of political unity and thus aided the independence of man and the centralisation of society. The crusades helped to destroy Feudalism. The cities especially profited by the commerce. The rise of the middle class was greatly hastened by the crusades. They gave a strong impulse to literary activity. "Since they brought together large numbers of people of all countries they developed the consciousness of national differences. Each nation came to hate all the others, one of the necessary steps apparently in the development of nationality."[70] In short they commenced that transformation of the various elements of European society into governments and peoples which is the character of modern civilization. "Without them the Renaissance could not have been what it was."[71] About the same time Royalty developed itself and helped along with other institutions to bring about the Modern Civilization. All the elements of the social state now reduced themselves to two, the Government and the People. The feudal nobility, the kings, the clergy, burghers and serfs are no longer the chief actors in History. The Government and the country alone occupy the stage. Thus after the termination of the crusades Europe entered the path which was to conduct it to its present state; and Royalty took its proper share in the great transformation. Thus diversity had ceased and similarity had led to Union. A powerful centralisation of interests, laws, manners and ideas was brought about. The necessary public power and public opinion had arisen.

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[70] Thatcher & Schwill: *Europe in the Middle Ages*, p. 432.

[71] *Ibid*, p. 434. Also Robinson & Breasted: *Outlines of European History*, Part I, p. 473.

It was with the sixteenth century that modern society really began. The modern age is separated from the middle age mainly by two differences. The boundaries both of the geographical world and of the world of thought have been enlarged. What are the characteristics of the Middle Ages? Emerton says, "The mediaeval period is one in which the great effort of human society is to fit itself to certain great abstract ideas and institutions. The peculiar thing about them is that they demand of the individual member of society that he shall, as far as possible, surrender himself to them and seek his highest usefulness by sinking his own personality in some form of corporate life."[72] These abstract ideas are a World Empire and a World Church. Law was during this time not the product of the individual legislative thought or action but purely the outgrowth of tradition, stronger than any existing legislative authority. Learning, most dependent upon individuality, was forced into a narrow channel by the great religious institution which controlled it. Literature, tied to a foreign tongue and frowned upon by the rulers of the world thought, stammered and struggled for utterance. Art was wholly devoted to the service of Religion. Morality inseparably bound up with religious ideas had for its prime object not the highest development of the individual man but rather the complete annihilation of all that makes him an individual. The ideal man of the Middle Age was the monk. Finally, society determined itself almost wholly without reference to individual quality, along the lines of certain well-defined classes. The noble, the bourgeois, the peasant, each was above all things a member of his class and could not go beyond it. The only exception to this rule was the clergyman. The clergy was the great levelling institution of the Middle Age and yet once in his order the clergyman was bound more rigidly than anyone else to sink his individuality in the interests of his class. Thus it will be seen that a deep distrust of man as of an unworthy being pervaded medieval thought. To the medieval mind there was a distinct element of error and of wrong in anything that depended upon observation through the senses or upon the reflection of the human intellect. Emerton says, "Whichever way we turn in the middle period we are impressed with the fact that individual thought and action had only a subordinate place."[73]

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[72] *Mediaeval Europe*—Preface, p. viii.

In the Modern Age which Michelet characterises as "a discovery of the world and of man," a significant change is perceived in every field of human effort. A bold spirit of inquiry and of assertion begins to take the place of a timid yielding to existing authority. Uniformity of life ceases to be the highest ideal of society and diversity begins to be respected. A man is no longer crushed for putting forth an idea. He may at least be heard. A vigorous middle class has sprung up and a great material advance has been made. Science now begins to venture upon the method of experiment. "Everywhere, to use another antithesis, the struggle of common sense against a kind of sense which claimed to be too high and too sacred for the common man."[74] The most vital changes have been made due to the increasing knowledge of physics, external nature and the Earth's history. And, as Nevinson[75] remarks, "The rapid development in man's physical knowledge during the last three centuries has tended towards greater personal freedom of thought and action." The great results of the two movements, Renaissance and the Age of Discovery, may be said to divide medieval from modern times. Renaissance made a rediscovery to man of the powers of the human mind while the latter meant for the medieval world the enlargement of the universe.[76] It was the time of the greatest external activity of mankind; it was a period of voyages, enterprises, discoveries, and inventions of all kinds. This was the time of the greatest expedition of the Portuguese along the coast of Africa, of the discovery of the passage of the Cape of Good Hope by Vasco de Gama, of the discovery of America, and of the wonderful extension of the European commerce. Thousand new inventions came forth; others already known but only within a narrow sphere became popular and of common use.[77] The introduction of gun powder altered entirely the conditions of war. The invention of printing by multiplying books made knowledge and culture accessible to the many and the ideas hitherto the privilege of the priests and the nobles began to throw their light into the dark and brutal lives of the lower orders. In the place of the feudal Aristocracy rose the absolute Monarchy with the power concentrated in one man.[78]

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[73] *The Beginning of Modern Europe*—Preface, p. viii.
[74] Emerton: *The Beginning of Modern Europe*—I Preface, p. 10.
[75] *The Growth of Freedom*, p. 67.
[76] Hollings: *Europe in Renaissance and Reformation*—Introduction, p. 1.
[77] F. Guizot: *History of Civilization in Europe*, p. 211.

English Society: Modern

We have seen what the elements of the European civilization are and how they evolved themselves into a modern spirit of intellectual enquiry. The effect of this impulse produced in the English society important changes in the 16th, the 17th, and the 18th centuries. The knowledge of Englishmen made them indignant at superstition which they formerly admired. In the 16th century their credulity and ignorance, though still considerable, were rapidly diminishing. It was found necessary to organise the religion suited to the altered circumstances and this was done by the establishment of Protestantism. In the Middle Age in England, the presiding principle in science, religion, and legislation was a blind and unbelieving credulity. Yet it is evident that until doubt begins progress is impossible. A remarkable evidence of the change that was then taking place is found in the two most important theological works which appeared in England during the reign of Elizabeth—Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity published at the end of the 16th century and Jewel's Apology for the Church of England. This spirit of scepticism in physics made the beginning of science in England possible and scepticism in Religion led to toleration. In politics it stimulated them to rise against the Government and eventually bring their king to the scaffold.[79]

During the whole of the 17th century, this double movement of scepticism and of toleration continued to advance. Several famous authors like Locke, Newton, Milton, Bacon, Hobbes, etc., flourished during this period. The progress which the English intellect was now making towards shaking off ancient superstitions was still further aided by the zeal displayed in the cultivation of the physical sciences. This, like all great social movements, was clearly traceable to the events by which it was preceded. First to doubt, then to inquire, and then to discover was the process the Great English teachers followed. Charles II incorporated the Royal society which was formed with the avowed object of increasing knowledge by direct experiment. Natural science began to do its work and thus introduced the elements of a great change. There was great progress in manufactures and it resulted in increase of national wealth. The two great obstacles, by which the nation had long been embarrassed, consisted of the tyranny of the Church and the tyranny of the Nobles. An attempt was now made to remedy these evils by striking boldly at the power of the classes who did the mischief. The House of Lords after a sharp struggle was obliged to abandon its pretensions to an original jurisdiction in civil suits. "These important improvements were the result of that bold, sceptical, inquiring and reforming spirit which had now seized the three great departments of Theology, of Science and of Politics. The old principles of tradition, of authority, and of Dogma were gradually becoming weaker; and of course in the same proportion there was diminished the influence of the classes by whom those principles were chiefly upheld. As the power of particular section of society thus declined, the power of the people at large increased." [80] As the 18th century advanced the great movement of liberation rapidly proceeded. The ablest men in the country no longer flocked into the church but preferred those secular professions in which ability was more likely to be rewarded. Nor has this increasing ascendency of laymen been confined to the executive government. We find the same principle at work in both the Houses of Parliament. While the fabric of superstition was thus being undermined by advance of knowledge of great religious revolution, which was a fitting supplement to the political revolution which preceded it, was effected in England. In the 18th century the Wesleyans were to the Bishops what, in the 16th century, the Reformers were to the Popes. The increase of scepticism stimulated their curiosity and the diffusion of education supplied the means of gratifying it. Hence one of the leading characteristic of the 18th century was a craving after knowledge on the part of those classes from whom knowledge had hitherto been shut out.

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[78] Thatcher & Schwill: *A General History of Europe*, p. 259. Robinson & Breasted: *Outlines of European History*, Part I, pp. 531-560. Hollings: *Europe in Renaissance and Reformation*—Introduction. Thatcher & Schwill: *Europe in the Middle Age*, pp. 616-667. Warner & Marten: *Groundwork of British History*, pp. 237-238.

[79] Buckle: *Civilization in England*, p. 281.

[80] Buckle: *Civilization in England*, Vol. I, p. 313.

Schools, circulating libraries, and printing presses came to be established and there was all-round reform in England.[81] The obvious tendency of affairs was to abridge the authority of the Church, the Nobles, and the Crown and this gave greater play to the power of the People. What are then the distinguishing achievements of the Modern Age?

They are:

(1) Exploration and knowledge of the whole globe.
(2) Higher standards of individual efficiency and comfort.
(3) Intensification of political organisation, with attendant public guarantees of personal liberties.
(4) Replacement of the idea of the necessity of uniformity in a definite faith and religion by toleration of many faiths or even of no faith.
(5) Diffusion of learning.
(6) Spirit of progress and decline of conservatism.[82]

Thus we can easily see how much the English society had advanced in every branch of knowledge. As the level of knowledge had advanced, they had modified their social institutions and their social environment was now such that it retained and diffused their intellectual conquests. The social institutions were such as to foster the progressive spirit which in its turn again modified the former. The English society in the 18th century and in the beginning of the 19th century was a vigorous, pushing, and modern society.

Hindu Society: Ancient—Medieval

Now let us take a brief review of the historical evolution of the Hindu society. In our society the theocratic principle predominates. The idea of God is so all-pervading that everything else is subordinate to it. There are no other principles trying to gain mastery in our society like the European society. The Hindu is a religious-minded fellow and will perhaps be ready to do for Dharma what he will not do for his country. This theocratic principle—idea of Dharma and God—finds expression in the social instinct of the Hindu. The king is Divine, the cow is Divine, the preceptor is Divine, his sacred books are

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[81] *Ibid.*, pp. 348-49.

[82] Hayes: *Political and Social History of Modern Europe*—Introduction, pp. xxi-xxiii.

Divine, the mother is Divine—thus the idea of Divinity is ingrained in his blood. The ideas of Dharma and God influence most of the thoughts of a Hindu. The result of this has been a remarkable simplicity in our civilization. Simplicity brings monotony and continued uniformity leads to stagnation. Our society is not, like the European society, in a state of constant flux; there are no competing principles or social elements struggling for mastery. It has continued, in its main structure, the same as it was ages ago.

Our social organisation is based on the caste system whose origin again is believed to be Divine. The first principle for a Hindu, therefore, is that the social organisation cannot be changed. All the social functions have been divided between these four castes and the maintenance of this social system is one of the duties of the King. The King must protect Dharma which enjoins upon each caste its specific duties. In this way there can be no change in its structure. Whatever may have been the original condition of the different castes, the principle of heredity having operated in course of time, they became rigid and fixed. As India was for a long time free from foreign invasions, the caste system was handed down undisturbed from father to son for generations. When the system became hereditary a new principle of stagnation was introduced. Thus devoid of any element of change in it, in the medieval ages, it had not only lost its original elasticity but had been divided into many sub-divisions. In fact it had become stationary and as a social structure was beyond any change. For when any caste has strayed from its path the King shall bring it back to the path of duty.[83] "Warm climate and easily obtained food," as Gettell remarks, "made possible the beginnings of social life but soon checked energy and caused stagnation. Abundant population created a large servile class with resultant social difference, castes, and despotism. The need for controlling primitive man unused to obedience and the connection between religion and politics led to rigid custom, enormous priestly power, and conservative policy."[84]

The Brahmins, the priestly class, were the privileged caste and it was their duty to serve the society by developing knowledge. They were the teachers who looked after the educational needs of the society. These functions could not be performed by men belonging to other castes. Thus there could be no competition and there was no advance in knowledge. They simply transmitted whatever they received from their fathers. Learning being a monopoly, there was never any need to add to it. In the Middle Age the Hindus were in the habit of looking to the Golden Age with great awe and veneration. They believed that the ancient Rishis knew everything and thus there was no occasion for them to exercise their own brains. Too much respect for traditions bred this habit of showing undue respect to inherited lore. Another thing that worked as a check on their desire to acquire new knowledge was the belief that the Vedas, the revealed knowledge, contained everything to satisfy their needs for all times. The Brahmins, therefore, did not do anything better than to learn by rote the Vedas or some other sacred books without caring a jot for their meaning or significance. The Brahmins if at all they had knowledge in the real sense at any time became in course of time very ignorant and had already lost the intellectual power of digesting new experience. The range of traditional thinking could not be wide. Owing to the ignorance of the Brahmins, the level of the society's culture, therefore, could not be high. Buckle says, "It is evident that a nation perfectly ignorant of physical laws will refer to supernatural causes all the phenomena by which it is surrounded."[85] The medieval Hindus were not only ignorant but also superstitious.

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[83] Narada (Jolly), p. 215. See also *Yadhnya Valkya*, I, pp. 360-361.
[84] *Introduction to Political Science*, p. 54.

Thus when Alexander invaded India the Hindus, being socially stagnant, backward in education, sunk in superstitions and ignorance, had become quite incapable of digesting new knowledge or experience, e.g., when Alexander defeated Porrus, or when Mahammud of Gazni defeated Prithvi Raj, the Hindus had lost the intellectual capacity to profit by their mistakes. They were in so static a condition that they never realised the necessity of analysing the causes of their defeat at the hands of the foreigners, or of finding out remedies to make such defeats impossible in future and then of transmitting their own experience to the future generations.

As an agricultural society, their wants were few and simple

[85] *Civilization in England,* Vol. I, p. 303.

and hence there was no "urge forward" to know things or to discover the laws of their relations. They had been entirely isolated from the whole world by natural barriers and this fact tended to keep them in their ignorance and thus made for stagnation. "Freedom from external danger led to a decadent race stock and the lack of competition and conflict among different ideas fixed original customs the more firmly." [86]

Now let us examine some of the Hindu institutions. Monarchy was the only form of government that the Hindus knew, and the duty of the subjects was to obey his injunctions.[87] The duty of a son was to obey his father. The pupil likewise must obey his Guru. The Shastras dictated even in the minutest matters and must be followed. Obedience and respect for authority are so much inculcated on the minds of the youth that they lose initiative and the power of exercising their own reason. Thus they lose the power of thinking for themselves.

The legal system is based on the joint family system, the working of which practice discourages independence of thought and action. The laws themselves are codified customs and as there is no legislative organ provided in Hindu Polity no new law can be made. The legal system, therefore, was not progressive and tended to make the society rigid. "Instead of civilization expanding the law, the law has limited the civilization." [88]

The marriage system also did not leave any freedom of choice to a person. Hence he is never called upon in his life to exercise his reason or his initiative which qualities of mind, therefore, gradually rust and atrophy by non-exercise.

The despotism of the King and the hegemony of the Brahmins did not leave any scope for bringing into play the mental faculties nor did they offer any opportunity to make mistakes and get valuable experience. Navinson remarks, "Even in cases where the majority goes most persistently wrong it is better for a nation to control its own destiny, learning by bitter suffering and admitting the free discussion or criticism of every decision than to avoid the evil consequences of errors by submitting to the dictation of one man."[89] The importance of providing for discussion or criticism in social organs will, therefore, be easily seen but the Hindu social system became in fact fossilised and non-progressive.

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[86] *Introduction to Politics*—Gettell, p. 49.

[87] Narada, p. 188. See also Prof. Beni Prasad: *Theory of Government in Ancient India*, p. 35.

[88] Henry Maine: *Ancient Law*, p. 19.

If we consider his philosophy it would be evident that owing to conflicting influences and myriad-systems, the Hindu does not know his own mind at a critical moment. He has been proverbially meek. He accepts the traditional doctrine of Karma and believes that he must belong to the caste into which he is born. Thus there is no incentive for him to make any effort to better his social lot.

In the case of women the less said the better. A female has to lead from beginning to end a life of dependence. Her social position is no better than that of a slave. And when ignorance is added to slavery it becomes a mighty restraining force on society. The function of the State is to keep the social order intact which does not admit of any modification. "The aim of the ancient State was less to introduce an improved social order," says Rangaswami Iyengar, "than to act in conformity of the established moral order of the Universe." The end of the State is stability and not progress. The maintenance of Dharma has in course of centuries resulted in the dwarfing of Indian genius and the stagnation of the main springs of life. Such an immobile society is moved to action if at all by external circumstances. And therefore the Medieval Hindu considered that all was well with them and their society until the bravest men, the Rajputs, were repeatedly routed on the battlefield. When a society loses its vitality and momentum it is incapable of making any mental effort to take to vigorous action or even to pursuade itself that any action is necessary. The inertia of a Hindu is proverbial and incentives to thinking are lacking in his social atmosphere. He is slow to learn anything by experience and in the absence of social contact, as in any modern society, with his fellows even that informal source of self-education is not available to him. The English could master the experience of generations gone by in a short time through books and could add to it from time to time but in this respect the medieval Hindus were for a long time at a disadvantage.

Owing to these internal defects of the Hindu social organisa-

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[89] Navinson: *Growth of Freedom,* p. 50.

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tion, the Marathas remained always inferior to their Western opponents, in education, knowledge, and all the other advantages that proceed from them. While in the English society the conscious purposive forces had already begun to operate the Marathas had not outlived their old social environment. The Marathas, not given to exercise their reason, had to rely upon impulse only and blind impulse does not lead us to success. Ginsberg remarks, " On the contrary if by reason we understand a principle working within and by means of the impulses and giving them unity of aim and direction, their reason is the very life of the whole social process. What we want is not blind reliance upon mystical impulses, not less reason but more reason, more understanding, that is to say, of the conditions under which the impulses may be made to work together so as to lead to the harmonious development of personality in society." [90] An act of will, says Ginsberg, depends also upon the kind of society and social institutions in which he lives and the extent to which that society has been able to discover the lines of harmonious development for the members that constitute it.[91] Both these are unthinkable in the Hindu society. " In definitely stratified communities there is no easy inter-communication between the various groups. The result is stagnation and imperviousness to the demands of the general public on the part of each group." [92] This remark makes it clear why the Maratha society with its rigid castes found it difficult to make any social progress or to unite in a common cause.

When they first received a lesson from the Muslims they made some progress but that was within the four corners of their social organisation and as they had succeeded against their Muslim opponents they thought, until they got fresh experience of their social weakness, that they would secure similar victory against the English. Their failure to see the difference in the character of the English civilisation points out their social incompetence to think clearly on any but a familiar issue. That is however not their fault as in the particular stage of their evolution they could not have seen either their own social defects or the good points of their opponent's society. Our discussion brings out the fact that Maratha society was not progressive because there was no separation of religion and secular matters. They were not like the English actuated by a spirit of scepticism, or doubt—a spirit which is necessary for any discovery. They had not the social means, social organs or institutions which could have diffused knowledge in the masses, even if they had the desire to do so.

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[90] *Psychology of Society*, pp. 167-68. See also Urwick: *Philosophy of Social Progress*, p. 229.

[91] *Psychology of Society*, p. 40.

[92] *Ibid.*, p. 160.

The structure of society, social institutions and their environment were not favourable to the growth of critical faculty or thinking processes as reason had no place in the medieval life. A stagnant society like that of the Marathas could not make rapid progress or any progress in the development of their social organisation because conscious purposive action was absent.[93] Muller-Lyer aptly says, " As long as man has no idea of the existence and reality of his development it follows as a matter of course that he must bear everything patiently as his destiny." [94] The Maratha generals who were medieval in their outlook forgot that " It is always a long step from knowledge to ability to act but nontheless it is a step from knowledge." [95]

Comparing then both the societies we can say that the Maratha society was medieval in spirit while the English were modern in outlook. Every advantage whether social or personal that the English had over their rivals was the result of their progressive social forces while the Marathas were so socially backward that they were incapable of thinking out suitable measures to improve themselves. Hence it is that we trace every defect that has been pointed out as the cause of the fall of the Maratha Empire to this highly unsatisfactory social condition of the Marathas. Point out any cause other than this and you can be sure that ultimately it is due to their medieval outlook and backward social organisation.

The above discussion would make it amply clear why we cannot treat even " want of scientific knowledge " as the basic reason of the fall of the Empire as M.M. D. V. Potdar [96] seems to have done. The question still remains why the Marathas could not possess that scientific knowledge. Was their social condition

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[93] Urwick: *A Philosophy of Social Progress*, pp. 231-33.

[94] *The History of Social Development*, p. 355.

[95] Baron Von Freytag—Loringhoven: *Deductions from the World War*, p. 166.

[96] Review of *Marathe Va Ingraj*, pp. 20-28.

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such as to have realised this particular measure as the sure remedy for their defects? We believe they could not have done so as they did not realise its necessity. Ability to see clearly what reforms were good for themselves was what they lacked. And that is generally a drawback of any medieval society. M.M. Potdar, however, deserves credit for having given due weight to this particular deficiency.

The medieval character of the Maratha Society, then, is the main cause of the downfall of the Maratha Empire. All other causes stem from this basic one.

CONCLUSION

The thought that defects of personal character depend upon society and its social atmosphere, if not wholly, at least to a great extent, did not occur to the Marathas at all. In fact the tragedy is that a medieval society cannot realise the important part society and its social environment play subtly in individual or social matters. Success in war rests as much on social organisation as on individual qualities of generalship, the collective discipline of the soldiers and the weapons of the army. Victory over a modern enemy can be achieved by a modern society alone for the necessary mental and other equipment is possible only under modern social conditions. It is futile, for example, to hope to work out a democratic social machine with an autocratic temperament. Neither is medieval society, a suitable electorate for a modern constituency. The whole question turns on the spirit that inspires our activity and this must be clearly grasped before we can venture on a democratic constitution. Modern political problems cannot be solved with the medieval spirit.

If we had seen our way to coalesce socially like the Westerners, we would have been long ago a great nation. National Unity, however, requires strong national sentiment and national integration is impossible unless the same is based on the healthy principle of equality and social justice as between the different States forming the Union. Unlike the Peshwa Government at Poona in the later days of the Maratha Empire, our Central Government must hold the scales even, between the constituent linguistic groups in their inter-State quarrels. It must not be actuated by any other motive but the promotion of the interests of the country as a whole. We must never forget that National Spirit is essentially of slow growth and unless we consciously work for its growth, not much time will be required to have chaotic conditions in this land, in place of orderly Democracy. That is indeed the main lesson of the Maratha history in its final phases. We must create those social forces which would make us an enlightened community worthy of a great future.

As Khare says, "The time has come when we should emulate the Westerner's example or remain slaves." We must build up social institutions on the Western model as the other Asiatic nations like Japan, Turkey and China have done. We must digest Western Culture and evolve a modern social organisation or perish.

Our ancestors, handicapped as they were in several directions, have achieved, to their eternal credit, enough glory and it is our duty to add to that heritage. Their example in facing death in a thousand battles ought to inspire us to greater efforts in the cause of our country. We must avoid their mistakes which were excusable in their case as theirs was a medieval society but these would be unpardonable in us because of our modern English education received by us over a long period. The tramp of the Maratha horse (though perhaps not literally) would, indeed, be heard again throughout the length and breadth of India in spite of what a famous English historian says to the contrary, but this time it would be not as conquerors but as the palladium of the rights and liberties of our countrymen. Their "Maharashtra Dharma" or their main doctrine of active resistance to evil will always inspire the Marathas to offer total opposition to injustice wherever found. "Marathaism" will have to be reinterpreted from time to time to suit changing conditions but the indomitable spirit of Maharashtra is Eternal. Let us, therefore, bear in mind the advice given by Ramdas Swami—"Remember Shivaji the Great and deem life a worthless trifle" and devote ourselves selflessly to the cause of the regeneration of our Nation so that Bharat shall be the first and foremost country on Earth in due course. Let us also make history like our forefathers.

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आधारभूत पुस्तकांची यादी

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